

Exiles appeal for water in Lebanon

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (R) — Nearly 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel made an urgent appeal Monday to aid agencies to supply them drinking water in a South Lebanon tent camp. On their 145th day trapped between Lebanese and Israeli lines, the 396 Palestinians complained that what water was left in area was dirty and undrinkable. "We appeal to humanitarian organisations and international agencies to supply us immediately with drinking water," spokesman Abdul Aziz Al Ramisi told reporters at the camp. "Water was supplied to us from a nearby stream but we were surprised to find out that it was... undrinkable and may harm the deportees' health." Dr. Rantisi said, Foreign relief officials said they were sending the men's appeal for help. Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hizbollah party extended a water pipe to the camp Sunday, security sources said. But Dr. Rantisi said the water was undrinkable and might harm their health. Two streams that supplied the exiles with drinking water during the winter ran dry after mountain snows melted. The Hasbani River runs along a deep valley about 700 metres east of the camp but the men say it is not suitable for drinking and the ravine is too steep for them to haul up water.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Iran to hold anti-U.S. rally during Haj

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's top Haj official flew to Saudi Arabia Monday, saying Iranian pilgrims were determined to hold an anti-U.S. rally in Mecca, Tehran Radio reported. Mohammad Mohammadi Reyschahi, Haj envoy of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, told the radio before flying to Saudi Arabia that he hoped the pilgrimage to Mecca at the end of June would be held in the "glorious" manner of the past two years. Four hundred people, mostly Iranian pilgrims, were killed in clashes with Saudi security forces during an Iranian rally in Mecca in 1987. But the event has become a peaceful gathering since 1991, when Iranians returned to Haj after a three-year boycott prompted by the bloodshed. The change reflects the shift of attitude in Tehran, which now seeks good relations with its Gulf Arab neighbours after hostilities peaked during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. Iran's late revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini declared that Haj should have a strong political aspect and Muslims should use the gathering to "disavow infidels." — headed by the United States and Israel. "I hope that pilgrims to the house of God will, as in the past two years, show their perseverance in following the imam (Khomeini) and loyalty to the leader (Khamenei) ... by their all-out participation in the disavowal of infidels ceremony," Mr. Reyschahi said.

Volume 17 Number 5304

AMMAN TUESDAY, MAY 11, 1993 THU EL QU'DER 19, 1413

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Kuwait to indict would-be assailants

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Seventeen men will be indicted in the next few days on charges of plotting to assassinate former U.S. President George Bush and planning other attacks in Kuwait, prosecutor Mohammad Banai said Monday. The state security court will be asked to formally charge the 17, including one still at large, with an attempt to kill Mr. Bush during his private visit here on April 14-16. Banai told the official KUNA news agency. It will also be asked to charge them with having had "contacts with Iraqi authorities in a bid to harm Kuwaiti security and weapons," he said (see related story on page 2).

Mandela in Bonn

BONN (AP) — Nelson Mandela, who sought to discourage investment in South Africa during a visit three years ago, said Monday he wanted German companies to help black South Africans emerge from white minority rule. Mr. Mandela also asked Chancellor Helmut Kohl for financial help for his African National Congress (ANC), which is negotiating with the government to schedule the first South African elections with black participation. The ANC needs money for its electoral campaign and for educational programmes for black South Africans, who have never before voted, Mr. Mandela said. He would not say how much he sought in his meeting with Mr. Kohl, but said: "I don't expect to return empty-handed to Johannesburg."

Mubarak in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak arrived here Monday on the second leg of a tour of Gulf monarchies. Mr. Mubarak, accompanied by Foreign Minister Amr Musa, arrived from Oman where his talks with Sultan 'Fahd focused on the rise of religious extremism in Muslim countries and ways of resolving inter-Arab divisions stemming from Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Mr. Mubarak is due in Bahrain on Tuesday, followed by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. An Egyptian spokesman said the president's tour was aimed at discussing ways of countering what he sees as a growing threat from Iran.

200 feared killed in Ecuador landslide

QUITO (AP) — Tonnes of soil and rocks buried a poor mining community in southern Ecuador, and authorities said Monday that more than 200 people were presumed dead. Governor Vinicio Suarez of Loja province told the Associated Press by telephone that "approximately 80 homes, in which we calculate that between 200 and 250 people lived" were buried. "We don't have exact figures on deaths or missing," he said. Mr. Suarez said that the landslide occurred Sunday afternoon during heavy rains.

Human rights issues threaten peace talks

Palestinians reduce number of delegates

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Human rights issues threatened Monday to cut short the ninth round of Arab-Israeli peace talks, now in its third and last week here.

To protest the lack of progress on human rights, chief Palestinian negotiator Faisal Hussein decided not to return to Washington following consultations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Tunis.

An official close to the PLO delegation told AFP in Washington that Mr. Hussein "will only return to the negotiating table if there is progress" in the talks, which were to resume Monday after a three-day break for the weekend.

According to the official, the other Palestinian delegates "might also leave Washington Monday or Tuesday," if there is no movement in the talks.

He said the Palestinians were awaiting the Israeli delegation's response to several of their concerns on human rights, notably the status of 400 Palestinians who were expelled in December from the occupied territories to southern Lebanon.

A working session of Israeli-Palestinian committee charged with improving human rights in the West Bank and Gaza was interrupted last week by the Palestinians, who accused Israel of footdragging in the case of the expelled.

The Israelis were themselves awaiting responses to the working documents they submitted last week to their Palestinian and Lebanese counterparts.

The Israeli delegation was withholding all comment until it received responses to its proposals, a delegation source said.

The document submitted to the Palestinians contained a draft declaration of principles calling for internationally-supervised elections in the occupied territories and recognising the geographic integrity of the territories that should be given autonomy for a five year period.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said in Tunis the reduction in the number of Palestinian delegates to the talks was in protest at unfulfilled U.S. promises and Israeli moves.

Mr. Arafat also told the Palestinian Wafa news agency that the PLO had ordered the suspension of working groups on Palestinian self-rule and on water and land resources.

The delegation was cut to a "small symbolic number" of delegates who have to "finish the ninth round of talks because of commitments to our Arab brothers," Mr. Arafat said.

Jamil Hilla, the PLO's information department director, said the Palestinian delegation had been reduced to three members from 14 members. He did not say who they were.

Blaming Israel and the United States, Mr. Arafat described the

ninth round of talks in Washington as one marked by "deceitful moves" that put the peace process once again in danger.

Mr. Arafat also said Washington ignored promises it had made to the Palestinians to lure them back to the peace talks.

PLO Executive Committee member Suleiman Najjab told Reuters the Palestinians had also decided to suspend their participation in three committees set up at the beginning of the current round of talks on Palestinian self-rule, land and water, and human rights in the territories.

The Palestinians agreed to resume talks last month under U.S. and Arab pressure after a four-month crisis caused by the Israeli expulsion of Palestinians in December.

Mr. Najjab said the PLO leadership, which met over the weekend in Tunis, had rejected an Israeli draft agreement on self-rule and had drawn up a counter-offer for the Israeli delegation.

"The Israeli draft ... contradicts the basis of the peace talks which are U.N. resolutions and the letter of assurance sent to the Palestinians by the U.S. administration," Mr. Najjab said.

"The Palestinian side will present its draft which will be in line with the basis of the negotiations," he added.

He said the Palestinians

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Rabin defeats no-confidence votes, but coalition prospects uncertain

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Monday tried to reshuffle his cabinet to hold together his squabbling coalition government and fended off three "no-confidence" motions in parliament.

The coalition crisis, the worst in Mr. Rabin's 10 months in office, is posing a threat to U.S.-backed peace talks which depend on the government having wide backing to make compromises.

Two of the motions, brought by right-wing and nationalist parties, challenged the premier's tactics in the peace process. A third, brought by the ultra-orthodox United Torah Party, was critical of Mr. Rabin's embattled education minister, Shulamit Aloni.

The government handily survived the challenge in the 120-seat Knesset, or parliament, by votes of 56-47 on each issue. The ultra-orthodox Shas party, which precipitated the crisis, boycotted the balloting. Several others were absent.

Mr. Rabin had been expected to survive.

He controls 62 seats in the



Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (left) and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres discuss the coalition crisis (AFP photo)

Knesset. If the six Shas legislators quit the government, Mr. Rabin could cling to power with the support of five Arab legislators outside the coalition. But he would be without a "Jewish majority" he feels is crucial for manoeuvring in peace talks with Palestinians.

Earlier Mr. Rabin persuaded Mrs. Aloni to step down and take

a compromise portfolio, government sources said.

"The affair is almost behind us. Only a few details are left to be sorted out," Mr. Rabin told reporters at parliament.

The details are, the sources said, that ultra-orthodox Interior Minister Aryeh Deri, who

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King assures Clinton of commitment to peace

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has assured U.S. President Bill Clinton of his commitment to an Arab-Israeli peace settlement and democratisation of Jordan.

In a May 9 letter, a copy of which was provided to the Jordan Times by the Royal Palace, King Hussein told Mr. Clinton that Jordan will consolidate the democratisation programme introduced in 1989.

King Hussein's comments were in response to a May 2 message from Mr. Clinton congratulating the Monarch on the 40th anniversary of his assumption of his constitutional powers.

Following is the text of the King's message to President Clinton:

"I was deeply moved by your warm message of friendship which I received on the 40th anniversary of my assumption of constitutional



powers in the service of Jordan. "I am proud to have been able, together with all Jordanians regardless of their origins, to contribute to progress and stability. Together we have absorbed the negative



effects of every disaster that has overtaken this region and affected its peoples. As for the establishment of honourable, lasting and comprehensive Palestinian and Arab-Israeli peace, rest assured Mr. President, that we shall never be

found lacking in our sustained efforts to attain these lofty goals for the future of all the children of Abraham.

"Jordan has held a beacon of hope and freedom high throughout the years of darkness. It is natural that we shall never falter in our opposition to tyranny and abuse of basic rights both within our region and global village.

"I too look forward to a genuine rebirth of cooperation between true partners and friends, based on mutual respect between ourselves, our governments and peoples. We are ever proud of upholding the noble ideals and principles that guided the great American founding fathers and our forebears alike. In the spirit of the leaders of the Arab Renaissance Movement over decades, we shall also strive to realise the legitimate hopes and aspirations of all Arabs for a better world."

Besieged Gazans appeal for U.N. aid

OCCUPIED GAZA (Agencies) — More than 400 Palestinians demonstrated at U.N. relief headquarters Monday, appealing for food aid as Israel's closure of the occupied Gaza Strip entered its seventh week.

The Gaza residents staged a sit-down strike in front of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) headquarters in Gaza City.

Israel sealed off the nearly two million Palestinians of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in late March to try to stem a wave of attacks against Jews.

Demonstrator Baker Fahsi, a 42-year-old father of nine who had worked in construction in an affluent Tel Aviv suburb until the closure, said he now owes his neighbourhood food store 600 shekels (\$220).

"I can't go on like this," he said. "I made 70 shekels (\$26) day in Israel. The grocer is demanding his money and he won't loan me any more."

In a news release, UNRWA complained of a \$29 million deficit for 1993. It said without additional donations of cash and food, it would have to freeze its aid programmes at current levels despite increasing needs.

Israeli authorities maintain there are no shortages of food for the 750,000 residents of Gaza. They say people in need can apply to army welfare agencies for help.

The army said it was checking a radio report Israeli officials turned away on Monday a shipment of food an clothing donated for needy Gazans.

UNRWA began handouts to 13,670 families in camps around Jerusalem and Nabulus at the end of April and will continue until May 19.

UNRWA spokesman Sandro

Tucci added that 3,400 refugee families began receiving the aid of 50 kilograms of flour and two kilos of powdered milk in Bethlehem and Hebron camps last week.

Another 21,000 refugee families who live outside the camps on the West Bank will be given rations in the coming days.

UNRWA expects to distribute food to 60 per cent of the 472,000 refugees on the West Bank, Mr. Tucci said.

Palestinian refugee families used to receive every two months 50 kilos of flour, 10 kilos of rice, five kilos of sugar and five kilos of cooking oil.

UNRWA has resources to ensure only four emergency handouts of flour and milk to 120,000 of the 132,000 refugee families, or 591,000 people, in Gaza by the end of the year.

Economic situation worsens

The income of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has fallen by at least 36 per cent over the past five years, while unemployment has risen to 40 per cent, according to a U.N. study released Monday.

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) study published in Washington, gross domestic product slipped 12 per cent annually from 1988 to 1990 in the occupied territories (17 per cent in the Gaza Strip and 11 per cent in the West Bank).

The industrial infrastructure is not well developed in the territories, said the study. In 1990, 4,455 factories were counted, but only five per cent employed more than 10 workers.

While figures for 1991 and 1992 are not yet available, the situation continues to deteriorate in the occupied territories, said the U.N. body (see page 10).

Iraq opens borders after 6-day closure

By F.V. Vivekanandam
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Hundreds of trucks closed the main Amman-Baghdad highway near the border crossing at Trebil and hundreds more prepared to head for the frontier Monday ahead of the expected lifting of an Iraqi-ordered five-day border closure.

Officials and Iraqi diplomatic sources said the closure, which went into effect early Wednesday to reinforce an Iraqi move to check currency smuggling after the invalidation of part of its pre-1990 banknotes, was expected to be lifted Monday/Tuesday midnight.

Vehicles were expected to be allowed in from around 6 a.m., the Iraqi sources said. Most of the vehicles had spent as many as six days at the border in the wake of the closure, which came as a total surprise.

Thousands of Iraqis stranded in Jordan and Jordanian businessmen anxious to find out whether they stood any chance to recover their losses in the invalidated currency (see page 10) were expected to flood the border crossing Tuesday.

Jordan is the sole official lifeline for Iraq, which is under sweeping international sanctions which include an air embargo.

The Iraqi authorities offered a 48-hour exemption for diplomats and official delegation to enter and leave the country immediately after order the closure, but imposed a blanket ban on all travellers and vehicles since late Thursday.

Similar measures and tightening of border patrols were also adopted at Iraq's other borders and along the lines that separate rebel Kurds in the north of the country.

Nayef Hawatmeh, head of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), who crossed the border to Jordan Friday, was the only known exception to the total closure. Several senior Iraqi diplomats were among those turned away from Trebil by the border security forces, who were reinforced by members of the elite Republican Guards.

Hundreds of Iraqi soldiers supervised by Republican Guards patrolled the 600-kilometre desert frontier in an effort to foil smugglers trying to take advantage of a Monday deadline for the cancelled currency to be exchanged within Iraq.

Iraq, which has set the death penalty for currency smugglers, has not reported any immediate border interceptions after closing the crossing point.

Tankers carrying Iraqi oil to Jordan were also included in the closure order, but are expected to resume their normal trips early Tuesday with additional Iraqi vehicles joining the fleet to make up for the short-fall caused in the kingdom's strategic reserves by the five-day suspension in supply.

Reports from Baghdad said hundreds of thousands of people had clotted the counters of state-run Rasheed and Rafidain banks over the past six days to exchange the invalidated British-printed 25-dinar pre-crisis banknotes for new bills printed in Iraq.

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Dilemma brews for 'Palestinian police force'

By Mariam Shablin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — While in the process of preparing to set up a loyal task force that would police the occupied territories within the context of a self-government arrangement, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) may find itself in open confrontation with young Palestinian militants who have been fighting an uneven battle against the occupation forces.

The creation of the force has been one of several topics on the agenda of the Palestinian-Israeli bilateral talks, whose ninth round is currently being held in Washington. The PLO leadership in Tunis is meanwhile readying itself to supervise such a force in the event that an agreement is reached with the Israelis on its formation.

As far as Palestinian officials are concerned the proposed police force should include members from the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) which are currently based in Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan. But, PLO



Many Palestinian youths taking active part in intifada enforcement groups are feeling let down by the leadership (file photo)

officials concede, Israel is unlikely to accept anybody other than Gaza and West Bank residents, at least in the initial stages of the agreement.

To ensure the success of this project, Tunis-based PLO officials maintain, the proposed police force would have to be

made up of West Bank and Gaza residents with confirmed loyalty to the mainstream PLO faction Fatah.

Since the envisaged brigade would be expected to constitute the back-bone of Palestinian law enforcing units in the territories, its operation is targeted

for early on in the interim period of self-government, once agreement with Israel is reached.

But even at this early stage of preparations the PLO stands accused of trying to undermine those armed Palestinian groups in the occupied territories who

do not support Palestinian participation in the peace talks. Damascus-based Palestinian groups, which are opposed to the talks, have claimed that Fatah is trying to disband and disarm its own armed factions in the West Bank and Gaza in an attempt to consolidate full control in the occupied territories.

Palestinian armed groups inside the territories include the so-called "Black Panthers" in the West Bank and the "Fateh Hawks" in the Gaza Strip. Both groups are Fatah affiliated groups of young men armed with light weapons.

Although recent instructions by the Fatah-backed Unified Leadership of the Intifada have urged Palestinians to step up their resistance against the occupation forces, the Damascus-based factions claim that the call does not include armed resistance by those groups against the occupation.

A Fatah denial, in the form of a counter accusation, was issued this week in Amman. In

DFLP opposes peace talks, but does not rule out role in election

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A prominent Palestinian leader, who is opposed to the continuation of the Arab-Israeli negotiations under the Madrid formula, says that while his group rejects the conditions of the talks, he does not rule out the possibility of taking part in legislative elections in the occupied territories if they are held under a mutually accepted formula.

"While we continue to reject the Israeli proposals for limited self-rule, we likewise renounce the use of violence to solve internal political conflicts," said Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

Speaking to the Jordan Times after returning to Amman from a week-long visit to Baghdad, Mr. Hawatmeh also said that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had denied he

ever blessed the Mideast peace talks, and that he continued to oppose the U.S.-led peace process. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat stated in Baghdad two months ago that the Iraqi president had supported the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in its negotiations with Israel.

"The Iraqi president confirmed that he never said what he was quoted as saying," Mr. Hawatmeh said, referring to Mr. Arafat's statements about the Iraqi endorsement of the peace talks.

"Iraq is against these negotiations which aims at normalising Arab-Israeli relations, and he (Saddam) said he advised all the Palestinian leaders with whom he met to withdraw from the talks, and to stick by the intifada and national unity to enable the possibility of holding new negotiations based on international resolutions and according to a single standard applied in the Middle East as in the

Gulf," Mr. Hawatmeh said. The Damascus-based Palestinian leader, who opened a DFLP office in Baghdad during his visit "to ensure our independent decisions," also discussed with President Saddam efforts for Arab reconciliation and bringing Iraq back into the Arab fold after its isolation following the Gulf crisis.

Speaking at his hotel suite in Amman, Mr. Hawatmeh — who said he held more than one round of meetings with President Saddam — added that they discussed "the possibility and steps to be taken in launching an initiative in a number of Arab capitals, governments and parliaments, to convene a comprehensive reconciliation framework to reevaluate what happened in the Gulf in a spirit of solidarity."

(Continued on page 10)

مكتبة من الصحف

U.S. hopes for better relations with Yemen

WASH. (AP) — A U.S. official said Sunday that Yemen's multi-party elections last week and the progress of democracy would pave the way for better relations with the United States and more foreign investment.

The elections will be a point of departure in the Yemen-U.S. relations, said David Mack, deputy assistant secretary of state for Middle Eastern affairs.

Continued progress of democracy will make Yemen more attractive for U.S. investment, he said.

Mack arrived in Sana'a Sunday in the latest sign of an end to the international isolation following Yemen's support for Iraq during the Gulf crisis.

Yemen is trying to overcome poverty and lawlessness and mend ties with rich Gulf neighbors and Western countries angered by its Gulf war stand which lost its vital economic aid.

Mack said that recent moves by Yemen to improve its relations with the Gulf Arab states would make it "more realistic to improve Yemen-U.S. relations."

Mack said the United States had not totally cut its economic aid to Yemen because of the Gulf crisis but decreased it to around \$3 million "after it became clear the governments of Yemen and the U.S. have different positions towards Iraq."

He said that a few months

before the elections the United States "made available to Yemen a loan for purchasing food commodities of \$5 million."

Yemen's conservative North and Marxist South merged into a single state three years ago.

Mr. Mack said that the new democratic process in Yemen, where the first multi-party elections were held on April 27, would help strengthen the country's unity.

"But just as unity was a very important step to hold the elections, I think it is also true that practising democracy will strengthen the unity," he added.

Yemen's presidential council announced Thursday that the new parliament assembly and elect its speaker on May 15.

"Only future developments will determine how important this will be for Yemen. You don't achieve democracy in one election," Mr. Mack told the news conference.

Also, he added, "it is important to remember that no country has a blueprint for democracy in another country... so I don't think you should look on what you do here as a model for anyone else to follow."

Diplomats here have said that Saudi Arabia viewed the elections in neighbouring Yemen as a potential harbinger of democratic change in the Arabian Peninsula.

Mr. Mack denied that Saudi Arabia had expressed such concern to the United States.



NO LONGER A TERROR SPOT: Foreign journalists, a major target for kidnappers in the 1980s, have made a return en masse to Beirut for the Asian qualifying rounds for the World Cup soccer finals. South African photographer Mark Gleeson also attracts attention from his Lebanese colleagues because he is two metres tall (AFP photo)

Libyans ask King Fahd to ignore sanctions for pilgrimage

CAIRO (AP) — Libya's legislature is asking Saudi Arabia's King Fahd to ignore international sanctions and let Libyans fly their country's aircraft on pilgrimage to Mecca.

The telegram reported Monday by the official news agency IANA was the latest step in a campaign to edge a crack in a 13-month-old embargo. Earlier appeals have gone to other Muslim governments and to the 51-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Subjecting the holy places to political vacillations contradicts the wishes of God," the telegram said.

The General People's Congress implores you to reject this decision and open the road to direct Muslim pilgrims to perform their Haj duties."

This month, millions of Muslims will travel on Haj, Cairo newspapers reported.

Monday that 1,500 Libyans had crossed the land border into Egypt en route to Mecca via Red Sea ferry.

The United Nations ordered the air travel embargo and arms and diplomatic sanctions to force Libya to surrender two Libyans for trial in the United States or Britain on charges they bombed Pan Am Flight 103. The 1988 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, killed 270 people.

This is Libya's second Haj under the sanctions, which allow Libyans to participate but only with permission of the U.N. Security Council. Libya has rejected the idea of asking permission of "Christians" — the council's non-Muslim majority.

But the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the largest grouping of Muslim countries, said it requested permission in response to an earlier Libyan request. No decision has been announced.

In the telegram sent Sunday

night, the General People's Congress told King Fahd, "the resolutions imposed unjustly and aggressively by the Christian states make the undertaking of the Haj duty impossible. The Arab-Libya Muslim people reject this."

Saudi Arabia said King Fahd arranged for Libyans to fly to Haj aboard Libyan Arab Airlines aircraft last year. Libya rejected the arrangements, a government spokesman said without elaborating.

Sunday night's telegram did not mention what air route Libyans would take if King Fahd said yes. The only ones over from Tripoli and Mecca pass over third countries, all of which are honoring the international sanctions.

Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, meeting Libya's foreign minister in Tehran, criticised the Islamic World for failing to back "revolutionary countries" against pressures from big powers, Tehran Radio said.

Foreign Minister Omar Mustafa Al Montasser delivered a verbal message from Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to Mr. Rafsanjani, the radio said without giving details.

The radio said Mr. Rafsanjani "criticised the failure to properly use potential in Islamic countries for confronting pressures put by arrogant countries on revolutionary countries with the aim of weakening their revolutionary stance."

He said Islamic organisations spent too much time on marginal issues.

Their efforts should be channelled into important Muslim problems like Palestine and Bosnia-Herzegovina and they should take serious decisions about fighting "colonialist influence" in Islamic countries, Mr. Rafsanjani added.

Gabi Butbol, head of the Karnei Shomron regional council, a cluster of settlements east of Tel Aviv, told the Associated Press Monday that he learned of the surveillance from "loyal sources."

Gad Ben-Ari, spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, said the government was closely watching the settler situation, but declined to discuss any surveillance activities.

"We never talk about how the Shin Bet operates. There is a close watch, but I'm speaking in general terms," Mr. Ben-Ari said.

On Monday, hundreds of residents of the West Bank settlement of Beit El blocked an army bulldozer trying to rip up a settler road built illegally over private Arab land, the army said. Soldiers pushed aside the protesters by force, and four settlers were detained for questioning.

Settler leader Aharon Domb said settlers would step up their protests against autonomy negotiations with the Palestinians.

He said he and others would shoot if they encountered a Palestinian policeman in the framework of autonomy.

Settler leaders met Sunday with Deputy Defense Minister Motta Gur to complain about the shadowing and warn him about the angry mood among the more than 110,000 settlers.

U.S. Congressional leaders urge action against Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States should retaliate, and consider using military force, if it is proven that Iraq was behind an assassination attempt against former President George Bush, congressional leaders said Sunday.

"If it can be proven it was state-sponsored terrorism by Iraq, we should retaliate appropriately," said Senator Richard Lugar.

Speaking on NBC Television's "Meet the Press," Mr. Lugar said military action must be among possible responses because "that, I suspect, is the only thing that Iraq would understand."

"We should retaliate," agreed House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Lee Hamilton, speaking on the same programme. "We cannot tolerate that kind of an action against a former president of the United States. It's just outrageous."

The White House said Saturday that an investigative team had been sent to Kuwait to gather evidence into an alleged Iraqi scheme to kill Mr. Bush when he visited Kuwait last month.

Sixteen people — 11 of them Iraqi nationals — and a 17th suspect still at large have been charged with conspiracy to kill Mr. Bush and execute other "acts of terrorism, sabotage, infiltration and robbery."

Rep. Newt Gingrich said that if Iraq was found to be behind the attack, "we should resolve explicitly and formally to drive Saddam Hussein out of power."

Asked on CBS "Face the Nation" whether he advocated the assassination of President Saddam Hussein or a military invasion, Mr. Gingrich said he was "talking about just simply increasing the pressure."

"I think as a symbol of America and as a human being, President Bush and his family deserve to know that we will not tolerate a government trying to assassinate an American," the Republican whip said.

Sen. Pat Leahy, said on CNN's "Newsmaker Sunday" that the plot should be taken "very seriously" and military retaliation

should not be ruled out "if we are absolutely sure it happened."

Speaker of the House Tom Foley, also told CBS that any response should wait until it is "clear that the evidence is overwhelming or without any ambiguity."

The Kuwaiti defence minister was quoted Monday as saying the emirate would not extradite suspects in the alleged plot.

The comment followed a report in the Washington Post that some U.S. officials advocated seeking the extradition of suspects, even though the alleged plot occurred on foreign soil.

Sheikh Ali Al Sabah, defence minister and acting interior minister, told the daily Al Anba the men would be tried in Kuwait because that was where they were going to carry out their plans.

He said the government was supplying the American government with information about the alleged Iraqi "sabotage net" that was uncovered last week.

Kuwait authorities said members of this net drove from Iraq in several cars laden with at least 250 kilograms of explosives. They said one of those arrested confessed he planned to strap explosives around his waist and blow himself up, along with Mr. Bush.

The former president was given a hero's welcome when he visited Kuwait from April 14-16. He is revered in the oil-rich emirate for leading the coalition that fought the Gulf war to evict Iraqi occupiers.

The Washington Post said last week that although the Clinton administration has credible evidence that Iraq was behind the alleged plot, President Clinton's top advisers were divided on how to respond.

The newspaper said some Justice Department officials want the suspects extradited to the United States for trials, while others argue that a plot to kill a former president requires direct retribution against the government involved.

Iraq has dismissed the charges and accused Kuwait and the United States of laying the groundwork for further aggression.

Aidee accuses foreign troops of 'murder' and 'interference'

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Somalia's main warlord, General Mohammed Farah Aidee Monday accused foreign troops of murder, torture and interference in the political affairs of the country.

Five months after the arrival of a multinational military force, Gen. Aidee told a press conference here, Somalia's "inhabitants are dying of hunger and lack medical care."

"We have received numerous reports of Somalis killed, mutilated, raped, imprisoned, tortured, robbed and harassed by the foreign troops," the leader of the United Somali Congress (USC) added.

He declared that "many regions have not received humanitarian assistance," though he paid credit to the foreign soldiers for their "success" in other areas where "famine and banditry have been considerably reduced."

The U.S. leadership of Operation Restore Hope, which began on Dec. 9 to protect relief supplies in the strife-ridden, starving Horn of Africa country handed over to the United Nations last week.

Gen. Aidee charged that officers in the military coalition were "interfering in political affairs by trying to form local governments in some communities," but he stressed his own "commitment to peace."

One of the missions of the U.N.-backed foreign intervention is to disarm the clan militias who have fought each other and killed and terrorised aid workers since the ouster of dictator Mohammad

Siad Barre in January 1991.

Gen. Aidee who has reached a political understanding with other clan leaders providing for a ceasefire, interim government arrangements and the restoration of law and order, said he hoped the U.N. Operation, UNOSOM II, "will not fail."

Otherwise, he warned, the "situation will once again become very bad and make the Somali people suffer."

McDougall visits troops

Canadian External Affairs Secretary Barbara McDougall provided a tonic for her country's soon-to-be returning troops Sunday during a brief visit to Belet Huen, 300 kilometres north of Mogadishu.

The first Canadian minister to visit Somalia since the deployment there last December of the multinational peacekeeping force.

Ms. McDougall praised Canadian paratroopers, who will be leaving the country in a few weeks, for doing their jobs in "the most difficult circumstances in the world."

She visited two primary schools which were rebuilt by the Canadians and now cater for 3,000 children.

Canada had contributed to "every peacekeeping mission since the first one in the late '40s" and currently provided "10 per cent of the world's peacekeepers," the minister said.

The 1,200-strong Canadian contingent is due to hand over Belet Huen to United Nations troops on June 1.

Iranian forces wage offensive in Iraqi Kurdish territory

ERBIL, Iraq (AFP) — The Iranian army is continuing an offensive in northern Iraq against members of the Iranian Kurdish opposition, the vice-minister for the interior of the self-proclaimed Iraqi Kurdish state says.

Speaking to AFP in Erbil, headquarters of the Iraqi Kurdish entity, Ahmad Sherif Ali said the Iranian army had since mid-April held positions three to four kilometres inside Iraqi territory.

The incursions near the localities of Qala Diza and Penjwin had caused 5,000 Iraqi Kurdish families to flee, he said.

Iranian artillery fire, which had caused fatalities, but had left a number of wounded, Mr. Ali said. He did not give a precise number.

But he also said that a member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran had been killed by "Iranian agents" in the village of Mahamshab.

Last Wednesday, the head of the Iranian Kurdish party had been in Paris that the Iranian army incursion began March 23 and had displaced some 7,000 people.

The vice-chairman of the self-proclaimed Iraqi Kurdish parliament, Najjab Aziz, for his part

condemned the Iranian attacks as "an intervention in Iraqi internal affairs."

"This kind of activities jeopardise the attempts of our government to normalise its relations with our neighbours," he told AFP.

The Kurdish "government" in Iraq, set up after elections in May 1992 and recognised neither by the Iraqi authorities nor by the international community, controls part of the north of the country.

Mr. Aziz and Mr. Ali denied that the Iranian Kurds based in Iraq had launched attacks against Iranian targets from the territory, as the government in Tehran had last month accused them of doing.

Mr. Ali said that although the Iraqi and Iranian governments had been enemies during their war from 1980 to 1988, they "became brothers to face the Iraqi Kurdish government."

However, the Iraqi authorities threatened a week ago to reply to any Iranian action posing a threat to their sovereignty.

Mr. Ali said that the Iranian forces had also moved Iranian Kurdish civilians away from the border area.

Israeli police agents said shadowing radical settlers

TEL AVIV (AP) — Government secret police are shadowing Jewish settler leaders after radical settlers warned they would torpedo any autonomy agreement with Palestinians, Israeli newspapers reported Monday.

The move comes as settlers grow more vehement in response to reports U.S.-backed peace talks will lead to handing over some administrative tasks in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip — including police duties — to Palestinians.

On Monday, soldiers clashed with settlers building an illegal road in the West Bank, and one settler group renewed vows to shoot any member of a Palestinian police force created under autonomy.

The decision to shadow settlers was made two weeks ago, the Haaretz daily reported. It said the head of the Shin Bet secret police ordered 24-hour surveillance on offices and homes of settler leaders.

Settler leaders met Sunday with Deputy Defense Minister Motta Gur to complain about the shadowing and warn him about the angry mood among the more than 110,000 settlers.

Settler leader Aharon Domb said settlers would step up their protests against autonomy negotiations with the Palestinians.

He said he and others would shoot if they encountered a Palestinian policeman in the framework of autonomy.

Settler leaders met Sunday with Deputy Defense Minister Motta Gur to complain about the shadowing and warn him about the angry mood among the more than 110,000 settlers.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Omniscience
18:30 Maguy
19:00 News in French
19:15 News in Arabic
19:30 News in Arabic
19:45 Special Programme
20:10 Forever Green
20:30 News in English
20:45 Film: "Missions of the shark"

PRAYER TIMES

18:00 Fajr
18:15 Sunrise
18:30 Dhuhr
18:45 Asr
19:00 Maghreb
19:15 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swaidah, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 623705
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salette Church Tel. 661757
Terrace Church Tel. 623566
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 752861
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151
Armenian International Church Tel. 625236
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 823234, 654932
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691
Church of the Redeemer ... Tel. 638236

Min./Max. temp. 13/12
Aqaba 19/31
Deserts 11/25
Jordan Valley 17/30

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 25, Aqaba 33. Humidity readings: Amman 29 per cent, Aqaba 25 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Yousef Nasser 751144
Dr. Jameel Tarif 794710
Dr. Mohammad Al Abbadi 778959
Dr. Raich Zeinoun 888085
Yecoub pharmacy 649545
Stamciani pharmacy 637660
Nairouhi pharmacy 623672
847632

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain, especially in the southeastern parts of Jordan. Winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be

northerly moderate and seas calm.

AMMAN:
Dr. Fayez Al Qadhi 661117
Alquds pharmacy 630341
ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Al Haddad 985417
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661117
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Fire Brigade 192, 621111, 637777
Police 192, 621111, 637777
Blood Bank 661117
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 847632

REPAIRS

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hassan Medical Centre 81381322
Khalidi Maternity, J. Aidun 64428116
Aidun Maternity, J. Ann. 64244112
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhes, J. Annam 636140
Palestine, Stamciani 66417114
Stamciani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muhsar Hospital 66722719
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 66416446
Italian, Al-Mutajirun 77710113
Al-Bashir, J. Aidun 77511126
Army, Marka 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

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MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Newspaper launched in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — A weekly newspaper has been launched in Gaza City to give the occupied strip its first regular publication since the intifada began in December 1987. Al Shorur (Dawn) first hit the streets in April and plans to come out three times a week, proprietor Mohammad Khas, 70, said. His licence from the Israeli authorities does not enable the paper to print daily. Mr. Khas wants to concentrate on Gaza issues because the four major Palestinian dailies published in East Jerusalem, which arrive in Gaza irregularly, neglect the strip. An investigation which arrived in Gaza last week of out-of-date food and medicines has forced last week on the sale of out-of-date food and medicines has forced shopkeepers to take expired goods off the shelves, he said. But Al Shorur, which supports the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the peace process, also wants to be a window on the world and has subscribed to AFP's 24-hour Arabic language service. "If the closure of the territories continues we will be increasingly cut off from the world," he said. "When you are confined to a small piece of land, people need to know what is happening in the world."

Swiss to appeal against Iranian sentence

ZURICH (R) — A Swiss businessman sentenced to three years in prison by a military court in Tehran for illegal contacts with members of the armed forces said Monday he would appeal against the decision. "I have instructed my lawyer in Tehran to lodge an appeal," Hans Buehler, a coding equipment salesman, told Reuters. The Iranian news agency IRNA said Sunday Mr. Buehler had been sentenced by Tehran's military court for "unauthorised contacts with some military men and complicity in disclosing some classified information." Mr. Buehler was held in prison for some nine months before being released in January this year on bail of \$1 million. He was originally also charged with bribery and illegal alcohol consumption. "I have to appeal and get the sentence overturned if I want to get the bail money back," he added. He was arrested in Tehran last year while on a business trip. Relations between Switzerland and Iran were strained early last year following the arrest and extradition to France by Swiss authorities of an Iranian suspected of involvement in the murder of former Iranian Premier Shapur Bakhtiar in Paris in August 1991. Mr. Buehler's arrest also worsened relations. A Swiss Foreign Ministry spokesman said Mr. Buehler's appeal was not a diplomatic issue and the matter would have to be settled between Mr. Buehler and the Iranian authorities.

Moroccan opposition returns to electoral body

RABAT (R) — Morocco's four main opposition parties have decided to return to a national commission set up by King Hassan to supervise the country's first parliamentary election in eight years. Their decision, announced in a joint statement, appeared to refute persistent rumours that they were contemplating a boycott of the June 25 election of 333 members of the chamber of representatives. They withdrew from the multi-party commission three months ago complaining about delays in satisfying their call for guarantees that the poll would be free and fair. The commission was meeting Monday. The old-guard National Istiglal Party, the Socialist Union of Peoples Forces, the Party of Progress and Socialism and the Organisation of Democratic and Popular Action said they welcomed measures taken by the government since their walkout. But they added that further steps were needed, including "vigilance committees" to prevent the buying of votes by wealthy candidates. The four parties, who have formed a "democratic front" to coordinate electoral strategy, charged that many candidates bought votes in local council elections last October when pro-government parties won a majority.

Iraq criticises papal envoy's remarks

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq said a frigid farewell on Monday to a Vatican envoy who dared publicly suggest to President Saddam Hussein that he seek peace with Israel. "The cardinal has gone and will never return," declared the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah. "He talked nothing but politics." Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, prefect of Oriental congregations, left Friday after a week-long visit to deliver papal messages to President Saddam and Iraqi Christians. During a meeting with President Saddam broadcast on Iraqi television and radio he urged the president to probe the possibility of reconciliation with Israel. "Why don't you try to feel Israel's pulse," the cardinal asked. President Saddam replied that he was not ready to accept conditions "at the expense of our dignity, our blood and suffering" and the Iraqi people would oppose him if he did. "They (the people) will say 'you are talking about flexibility while we are starving,'" President Saddam said. Al Jumhuriyah said the cardinal's remarks showed that Iraq's hostility to Israel was the real reason for the Gulf war and continuation of U.N. trade sanctions. "The cardinal...hinted that there is no solution without peace with Israel," the paper said.

Jewish pilgrims flock to Tunisian synagogue

DJERBA, Tunisia (R) — More than 2,000 Jews flocked to North Africa's oldest synagogue on this holiday island off southern Tunisia Sunday — the highest number in more than 25 years. Most of the pilgrims to the synagogue, reputedly built six centuries before Jesus Christ was born, were French Jews of North African origin or members of Djjerba's 800-strong Jewish community. "We were expecting 200 to 300 pilgrims from France, but they are more than 2,000," said a jubilant Gabriel Kapla, chairman of the France's Associations for Jews of Tunisian Origin. Last year, up to 600 pilgrims attended — at the time, the highest number in years of Arab-Israeli tension. Tunisia, host to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters, has been encouraging the pilgrimage. Pilgrims processed, amid tight security, through the lanes of the island and the olive groves surrounding the synagogue. Sahbi Al Basli, governor of Medenine, of which Djjerba island is part, received the community leaders and attended part of the festivities.

Militants kill policeman in Egypt

ASSIUT (AFP) — Two Muslim fundamentalist gunmen shot dead a policeman trying to arrest them Monday in a market-place in southern Egypt, sparking a gunfight which wounded five people, police said. Lieutenant Khatib Imam became the third Egyptian policeman killed by Muslim militants since Sunday after he spotted two men suspected of having assassinated a high-ranking police officer, police said. Other police officers in a high-ranking police 350 kilometres south of Cairo, then fought a gun battle with the gunmen, wounding one of them and four other people, police said.

17:55 Frankfurt (R)
18:30 Vienna (R)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

16:45 Rome (AZ)
18:20 Paris, Beirut (ME)
20:20 Beirut (ME)
22:59 Bucharest (RO)

17:45 Dubai (AZ)
01:00 Bucharest (RO)

MARKET PRICES



HIS MAJESTY King Hussein Monday conferred on visiting Omani envoy Shabib Ben Taimour, the Jordanian Al Nabda Medal of the First Order. Mr. Ben Taimour, who arrived in Jordan last week, is advisor for environmental affairs to Sultan Qaboos bin Sa'id. The presentation of the medal took place at the Royal Court in the presence of officials and Jordan's ambassador to Oman and the Omani ambassador to Jordan.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Premier congratulates Eritrean leader

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday sent a cable to the head of the Eritrean Provisional Government Issais Afeworki voicing Jordan's delight over the outcome of the Eritrean people's referendum which was held in the country on April 23. The referendum resulted in the people voting for independence from Ethiopia. Sharif Zeid said Jordan was looking forward to strong ties of friendship and cooperation between Jordan and Eritrea.

Minister urges expanding agricultural sector

RAMTHA (Petra) — Agriculture Minister Fayez Al Khasawneh Monday said the feasibility of agriculture for any nation cannot be measured in terms of profits and losses "because it is a sacred duty which achieves the national identity and links people to their land." In a lecture at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), Dr. Khasawneh called for expanding the agricultural sector and supporting its workers. He said conflicts between countries on supporting agricultural commodities in world trade had reached the extent of imposing sanctions by one side on another, stressing that such conflicts are in fact a continuous struggle for existence.

Jordan team leaves to monitor Cambodian elections

AMMAN (Petra) — An 11-member delegation representing the Ministry of Interior left Amman for Cambodia to take part in United Nations-sponsored monitoring mission of the general elections there. The Jordanian government had earlier received a request from the U.N. secretary general to participate in the seven-nation team that would monitor and supervise the elections, due in the last week of May.

RJ takes off for Chicago May 20

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national air carrier, announced Monday that its first flight to Chicago will depart Amman on May 20. RJ will be making two weekly flights to the U.S. city, employing Tristar jets which accommodate 240 passengers, a RJ statement said. With the addition of Chicago to its international routes, RJ will be reaching four destinations in North America including New York, Montreal and Toronto.

Road accidents kill 7 in last week of April

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Public Security Department (PSD) announced Monday that seven persons were killed and 275 others were injured in 488 road accidents during the last week of April. In another statement, the PSD said that the first week of May the number of major crimes decreased sharply.

Iraq-Jordan transport firm to meet Saturday

AMMAN (Petra) — The general assembly of the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company will open a meeting in Amman Saturday to review the company's operations. The Jordanian side to the meetings will be led by Deputy Premier and Transport Minister Ali Suheimat. The two-day meeting will also discuss several financial and administrative matters.

Australia offers new meat chiller to Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Australia has offered to provide a new meat chiller to the Amman Municipal Abattoir (slaughterhouse) at Ain Ghazal. At a recent ceremony in Amman Australian Ambassador to Jordan, Jon Sheppard, handed the Amman Mayor Mohammad Bashir a letter from the chairman of the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation (AMLC), R. Austen, formally offering to provide the new unit. In his letter, Mr. Austen acknowledged the excellent relationship that has developed between the AMLC and the private and government sectors in Jordan that are involved in the live sheep trade. As a result, the AMLC and the Australian live sheep industry has formed a consortium to fund the construction of the chiller, after an Australian technical expert had visited the abattoir in 1992 to develop the specifications for it. The new unit will increase the capacity of the chilling system to hold 2,000-3,000 sheep per day, plus 300-400 cattle. At a meeting with the mayor, Australia also offered to provide free technical assistance to the Amman Municipality in drawing up specifications for the new slaughterhouse facility.

Yajouz residents complain of lack of services

RUSEIFA (Petra) — Residents of the housing estate at Yajouz have complained to the government about insufficient basic services. Their representatives said in interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that they were in need of regular bus service, a school and telephone services.

Algerian education head arrives for talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Algerian Education Minister Ahmad Jabbar arrived in Amman Monday on a four-day visit to Jordan at the invitation of his counterpart Thounan Al Hindawi. The Algerian minister will hold meetings with government ministers and will tour the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), the Higher Council for Science and Technology (JUST) and comprehensive schools for girls.

Minister calls for press council

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Information Mahmoud Al Sharif Monday called for the creation of a higher press council, offering advice and consultations to journalists. In a lecture at Yarmouk University, Mr. Sharif said such a council, which would include specialists in the field, will assume the task of guidance rather than punishing journalists, stressing the need to set ethical standards for the profession.

Iranian aviation officials arrive for talks

AMMAN (Petra) — An Iranian civil aviation delegation arrived in Amman Monday to hold talks with Jordanian officials on the prospect of opening an air route between Jordan and Iran. The delegation which is headed by Iranian Deputy Minister of Roads and Transport and head of the Civil Aviation Authority Mohammad Bani Bakharyan was received by Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority Ahmad Juweiber, senior CAA officials and staff from the Iranian embassy in Amman.

U.S. music ensemble to award scholarship

AMMAN (J.T.) — The American Apple-Hill Chamber Players Monday began a four-day visit to Jordan to perform concerts, conduct master classes and award a scholarship enabling a Jordanian music student to participate in the 1993 Apple-Hill Summer Festival.

The players, comprising Betty Hawk (viola), Richard Hatthorne (double bass), Robert Merfeld (piano), Paul Cohen (cello), Mowry Pearson (violin) and Eric Stumacher (piano), will jointly hold workshops with the Jordan Armed Forces Orchestra and the teaching faculty at the National Conservatory (NMC)/Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

The group will also perform a concert at the University of Jordan at 8:00 p.m. tonight.

The Apple-Hill Chamber Players' visit to Jordan will culminate on Thursday May 13 in the announcement of the winner of a music performance contest organised by the group. Eleven Jordanian students are competing for

the scholarship enabling the winner to participate in the group's annual summer festival at Apple-Hill Farm in Nelson, New Hampshire from June through August. Apple-Hill Players will also present a double bass instrument as a gift to the NMC.

The visiting players' activities in Jordan come as part of cooperation between the NMC and the American Centre (USIS) in Amman.

The group is one of America's foremost chamber ensembles and has won nationwide distinction for its vital and eloquent presentations of chamber literature for piano and strings. During each summer, the Apple-Hill Chamber Players are the core faculty for the internationally-celebrated Apple-Hill Summer Festival. The players have expanded Apple-Hill's intergenerational student population to include students recruited through workshops held during their international tours.

Muslim-Christian party sends message to Pope

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Arab Democratic Islamic Movement (Doa'a), which received legal authorisation as a political party last month, sent a message to Pope John Paul II this week explaining its principles as an Islamic-Christian party and calling for an Islamic-Christian dialogue on the widest possible level. Doa'a spokesman Marwan Sudah told the Jordan Times that the message, which explains the need for further interaction between the two faiths, was handed personally to the Pope at the Vatican by an emissary, and the party was awaiting a favourable reply.

Only one month after its official legalisation, the party has completed its organisational plans in the various governorates and elected provincial leaders including women, said Mr. Sudah, the first Christian member of the party.

He said that elections for the party leadership in the Amman area will be held Wednesday.

More than 1,000 Muslims and Christians have registered as party members, including women, Mr. Sudah said.

When it was legalised, the party had 72 founding members including 12 Christians and 11 women, but the number of women has at present reached nearly 30 per cent of the total number of members, Mr. Sudah said. "Our party aims to bring about and promote closer relations and interaction between Christians and Muslims and joint work to safeguard the nation's interests," the spokesman said.

Christians are joining the party now that they are sure that their membership does not compromise their religious beliefs in any way, especially as the party is oriented towards achieving closer ties among the Muslim and Christian communities in Jordan,

he explained.

Emphasising that the party has no affiliation to any foreign circles, Mr. Sudah said members of the U.S. and French diplomatic missions had visited the party offices in Amman to familiarise themselves with the party programme, as they did with other parties.

The U.S. diplomats, he added, wanted to determine whether the party leaders and the party programme were directed against United States policies in the Middle East.

Mr. Sudah said Doa'a party leaders levelled strong criticism of all foreign policies regarded as hostile to the Arabs and supportive of Israel.

He said his party has proposed to four other Jordanian parties the submission of a joint petition to the government to introduce an amendment to the country's 1986 election law, demanding that the one-man-one-vote system be adopted.

Without naming the other four parties Mr. Sudah said that together with Doa'a, these are now pursuing efforts to achieve this goal.

Last month the Doa'a spokesman criticised present Islamic movements which, he said, adopted regressive methods of analysis of the Koran.

He indicated that Doa'a's principles are intermingled, have nearly 30 per cent of the total number of members, Mr. Sudah said. "Our party aims to bring about and promote closer relations and interaction between Christians and Muslims and joint work to safeguard the nation's interests," the spokesman said.

Christians are joining the party now that they are sure that their membership does not compromise their religious beliefs in any way, especially as the party is oriented towards achieving closer ties among the Muslim and Christian communities in Jordan,

he explained.

Jordan, Egypt prepare pilgrim transport facilities

AQABA (Petra) — Jordanian and Egyptian officials met here Monday to discuss transport facilities for the Egyptian pilgrims going to Mecca through the port of Aqaba and agreed on several measures designed to remove travel obstacles and delays.

A statement said the officials discussed difficulties that arose in last year's pilgrimage season which resulted from the lack of sufficient means of transport, shortage of ferries commuting between Aqaba and Nweibeh and the delay in the arrival of pilgrims' luggage.

The two sides decided to assign two quays at the Aqaba harbour

for three ferries to dock at the same time in order to speed up travel operations.

The Egyptian officials said larger space was assigned at the Nweibeh port to accommodate trucks, buses or small cars, and other facilities have been installed to facilitate procedures.

The two sides agreed that priority should be given to the transportation of pilgrims and their luggage, adding that operations room will be established in Nweibeh and Aqaba for the exchange of information between the two sides to help control transportation procedures.



THE SOCIAL Committee of Royal Jordanian, the national airline, Sunday visits the Social Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicapped in the Baqaa refugee camp, north of Amman. The committee members offered the centre a new refrigerator as a token gift. The social committee is made up of RJ staffers who take part in philanthropic work and social development projects. Contributions to their activities are collected from RJ personnel and/or management.

King praises Jordan-Japan ties, based on clarity, mutual confidence

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday expressed his deep satisfaction with the current level of Jordanian-Japanese relations which he said were based on clarity and mutual confidence.

Speaking at a meeting with President and Chairman of the Board of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan (OECF) Akira Nishigaki, King Hussein said "Jordan values the human being because he represents the real durable wealth."

"We call on all concerned in the region to open the way for and uphold human rights and adopt political pluralism to give people an opportunity to shoulder responsibility and enhance the meaning of democracy," said King Hussein.

Mr. Nishigaki emphasised the importance of Jordan's role as an element of stability in the region through its economic, cultural and political policies.

Expressing his delight at familiarising himself with the successful democratic process and development in Jordan, Mr. Nishigaki said his country would continue to provide assistance to the countries of this region.

Mr. Nishigaki was later received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, with whom he reviewed Jordanian-Japanese economic relations.

Prince Hassan expressed regret over a practice by the international financial institutions in dealing with the countries of the Middle East individually, whereby they fund projects totally independent from one another.

He said there was a need for these institutions to deal with the



His Majesty King Hussein receives President and Chairman of the Board of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan Akira Nishigaki at the Royal Court (Petra photo).

countries of the area from a regional perspective.

Mr. Nishigaki outlined his views about means of bolstering Japanese-Jordanian cooperation. He said Japan understands the basic and positive role played by Jordan in the region, pledging his country's determination to further strengthen bilateral relations.

He added that Japan and Jordan hold similar views on many matters.

The OECF was established in 1961 in accordance with the Overseas Economic Cooperation

Fund Law of Japan. Its purpose is to promote Japan's cooperation by providing funds for industrial development and economic stability in developing countries.

An official at the Japanese embassy here said the OECF has been extending loans to foreign governments including Jordan, government agencies and other eligible organisations in the developing world.

He said Jordan's financial contribution to the Middle Eastern countries affected by the Gulf crisis amounted to \$2,000 million.

Up to March 1992, the OECF has provided eight project-type loans and three commodity loans to Jordan totalling about \$147,961 million yen.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Japan gave Jordan soft loans totalling \$700 million during the Gulf crisis to help the country overcome its economic difficulties.

Accompanied by a three-member team, Mr. Nishigaki, who started his visit to Jordan on May 7, is expected to leave for home today.

Cost of living up to 6.8% in 1992

AMMAN (Petra) — The cost of living index has risen to 6.8 per cent in 1992 compared to the year before, according to a report issued by the Department of Statistics.

The report said the index had risen by a total 68 per cent between 1988 and 1992; the highest rise was witnessed in 1989, when that year it rose 27 per cent.

The second and third highest percentages were registered in 1990 and 1991, at 22 and 13 per cent.

The report also said that food expenditures in 1992 were at their highest at 39.25 per cent, followed by shelter expenditures which stood at 26.41 per cent, commodities and services at 24.42 per cent, and clothes at 9.9 per cent of the total expenditures.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Adnan Al Sharif at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of Yemeni heritage which includes photos and paintings depicting development in Yemen, books on the history of Yemen, traditional costumes and handicrafts at Yarmouk University.
- ★ Exhibition of photos of His Majesty King Hussein and aspects of development in Jordan under his leadership at Yarmouk University.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Ahmad Nawash at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian Artist Youssef Abdelshe at Al Balka's Gallery, Al Fubeis city.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Fragments: Weavings and Works on Paper" by Kevin A. Eluch and Margaret M. Eluch at the American Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Saba Kathibh Nour at the Spanish Cultural.
- ★ Exhibition of contemporary Japanese posters at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of posters at the Goethe Institute.
- ★ Exhibition of photographs at the British Council.

FILM

- ★ Russian film entitled "The Choice" at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 7:30 p.m.



UNIVERSITY OF Jordan President Fawzi Gharalbeh (third from left) Monday opens an exhibition at the University, marking the 800th anniversary of the death of Muslim leader Saladdin. The exhibition, which will last until Wednesday, includes scale models and maquettes of architectural achievements in the holy city of Jerusalem, Karak and Ajloun castles and the Saladdin fortresses.



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
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Jordan Press Foundation,

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

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Much at stake in Aloni's case

THE IMPLICATIONS of the Israeli cabinet crisis that developed and grew over the fate of Education Minister Shulamit Aloni go beyond the immediate Israeli context to touch upon the continuous tug-of-war between liberal and ultra-conservative forces throughout the Middle East region. At stake is the fate of the struggle between those who are perpetually entrenched on the right and others who seek to accelerate the dynamics of modernisation and change in their respective countries.

For us Arabs, there may be a sad irony in the crisis. It is that both the ultra orthodox Shas Party, to which Interior Minister Aryeh Deri belongs, and the liberal Meretz, of which Aloni is leader, are key supporters of the peace process with the Arabs. Just as Aloni and her 11 Meretz colleagues in the Knesset are avowed supporters of the peace talks, so is in fact Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the spiritual leader of Shas Party. Yosef is often said to hold the key to the fate of Arab-Israeli negotiations, especially when the time comes for Israel to make territorial concessions. He has spoken strongly and clearly for peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours by announcing that in Judaism peace is more important and pressing than territory. There may be little wonder in the fact that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has found himself in a bind for not being able to live with or without either Shas or Meretz in his government.

But while we do not intend to go into detailed Israeli politics, we think that a victory of Jewish fundamentalists, from Shas or any other religious party, over the leftist Meretz in the Labour-led coalition would constitute a setback for the forces of peace in Israel. The Palestinians in particular have cause to worry should Aloni's party suffer defeat at the hands of Israeli hardliners and religious bigots. Aloni's demotion to a less important portfolio in Yitzhak Rabin's cabinet could also represent a blow to peace prospects and Arab-Jewish coexistence in general. Speculation that Rabin might appoint Aloni to head another important ministry could be a prudent move by the Israeli prime minister. Fundamentalists everywhere look at education as a vehicle for change, and they are right. However, peace that has eluded this region for decades now would be even a greater instrument for the desired change towards coexistence and cooperation. The absence of peace will only drive radicals on both sides to more entrenchment and more extremism. The likes of Shulamit Aloni in Israeli society should not be allowed to lose the battle. A voice like hers, which advocates Palestinian national rights should not be silenced at the altar of the "elders of Zion."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE ISRAELI government crisis has dropped a decisive moment just as the Arabs and the Israelis are about to embark on the crucial third week of negotiations in Washington, said the Al-Dustour daily Monday. At this particular juncture, when the Israeli government was supposed to declare its clear position and offer certain concessions to help settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, differences among the Israeli ministers emerged, said the paper. It said that judging from previous experience one can only say that whenever Israel feels that its back is to the wall, it creates internal problems to delay taking crucial decisions. It is feared that the Rabin government would now exploit the internal cabinet differences to perpetuate its present intransigent position, laying fresh obstacles in the path of a Middle East settlement, the paper continued. Attention could be shifted from the peace talks to the differences in the Israeli government and role of the Shas (religious) Party inside the coalition, continued the paper. What would be interesting to see, added the paper, is the attitude of the U.S. administration which had pledged to play the role of full partner to help achieve a lasting settlement.

A COLUMNIST in Al-Rai daily Monday criticised the government for failing to take decisions on issues of concerns to the public. The government has decided to stay on for at least two more months, thus freezing all economic, legislative and political decisions and leaving everything unchanged for fear of arousing the anger of its opponents, charged Fahd Al-Fanek. The writer said that some ministers are rejoicing over the government's decision to stay on because it means they can remain in office on the one hand, and use extra time to win the favour of the electorate if they plan to run for elections, on the other. In the meantime, no one expects the government, which now serves on a transitional one, to do much, having failed in the past one and a half years to make major achievements, said the writer. The government has failed to take a decision regarding the applications of the sales tax, as it had pledged to do in 1992, simply because some of the Cabinet members were opposed to it, said the writer. Parliament this year oppose this for fear it would compromise their chances of success, the writer continued. Neither did the government want to take a decision concerning the election law, or whether elections will be held this year, or the question of introducing amendments to the present law, said the writer. In addition, he said, the government has failed to take a decision concerning the agenda of the Jordanian-Israeli talks in Washington. He charged that this government could not claim it has achieved any step towards economic progress of stability in the country.

The View from Fourth Circle

Techno-racism and the onion ring machines

By Rami G. Khouri

The enormity of the changes taking place in the world after the end of the cold war is difficult to grasp all at once. Yet, the new global realities are slowly evolving into what I believe may be a fresh pattern of ideological relationships that may define the world for many decades to come. One needs to step back from the day-to-day news and try to identify broader trends. A few are already clear.

The former East/West divide (NATO/Soviet Bloc) was the anchorage around which the economic concept of first, second and third worlds developed in the second half of this century. This dual categorisation of countries according to their ideological and economic condition appears to be giving way to a new set of criteria, which are predominantly economic, racial, and religious.

The new arrangement is not as simple and neat as the old cold war, East/West, North/South divide. The emerging new global ideological dynamic comprises a relatively clear northwest/southeast demarcation line of rich/poor countries, which corresponds very approximately to racial and religious distinctions. The pivot of this ideological schism is the Mediterranean basin. The northwest is largely composed of industrial/consumer societies that are predominantly white in colour, Christian in religion, and imperial in temperament. (By "imperial" I don't mean only that they physically occupy and exploit foreign peoples, as they did in the last several centuries. I mean, in today's context, that they find it acceptable, probably even imperative, that they enter into self-imposed military-commercial arrangements that allow them to maintain access to and control of selected resources and lands in the south that are deemed vital to their own lifestyle, comfort, and survival — or that they can drop like hot potatoes when the southerners' value has lapsed).

The northwestern consumer democracies are now approximately faced by a diverse collection of southeastern states that are largely non-industrial, non-Christian, and non-white. This is not necessarily a confrontational situation, and these two worlds do not have to end up in a combative mode. Yet, initial indications suggest that a new brand of ideological confrontation may be in the making; this could lead to other forms of combat (economic, diplomatic, religious, cultural and military) if current trends are not checked and reversed.

In the post-cold war world, the United States is the symbol of northwestern military dominance and cultural ethno-centrism; and it leads the northwestern countries in a campaign that seeks not only to maintain their own values and lifestyle (which is understandable, and perfectly reasonable), but also to impose it on the rest of the world (which is questionable, both morally and historically). The Kurds should not only be free; they should also be happy by eating McDonald's onion rings.

The first signs of this new ideological demarcation line are not pretty. The Gulf war, Bosnia, southern Sudan, Tajikistan and other situations suggest that our emerging new world order is based on the concept of peripheral peoples, non-strategic countries, disposable cultures, and non-vital human and cultural resources. Iraqis, Sudanese, Bosnians and others can suffer and die because they are not important to the northwestern culture of shopping malls, satellite sex, junk bonds, and two-track morality. Non-benign neglect, along with fast cars and short historical memories, are the new operative principles that may drive northwestern policy towards the rest of the world.

A second concept we notice is that of double standards in a wide range of applications, such as implementing U.N. resolutions, international humanitarian law, human rights safeguards or democratic principles. We saw this applied viciously in the Gulf war, and we continue to see it throughout the world. Some war

criminals are prosecuted if they threaten the comforts of the northwest; others are decorated if they savage the disposable and negligible cultures of the southeast.

A third concept is that of technological barbarism, which means the use of advanced technologies and military overkill in conflict situations, in such a manner that northwestern lives are spared but southeastern lives are sacrificed in tens or hundreds of thousands. It is interesting to see how the northwestern obsession with assuring low casualties in the Gulf war has been the main reason for slow intervention to stop the suffering in Bosnia. The northwest will only intervene in Bosnia in a manner that allows it to use the same technological barbarism we saw in Iraq. This means not only massive killing of the enemy during battle, but the use of such massive overkill that the killing goes on for years. We see this most dramatically in Iraq today, where tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians suffer or die because of the continued impact of the bombing during the war, and of the sanctions that remain in force (both of which rely on advanced technologies).

"The emerging new global ideological dynamic comprises a relatively clear northwest/southeast demarcation line of rich/poor countries, which corresponds very approximately to racial and religious distinctions."

Allied to the concept of technological barbarism is the fourth new world order concept of technological racism. This means that northwestern cultures have designated a series of advanced technologies (missiles, ballistics, nuclear knowhow, chemical/industrial technology) that are deemed inappropriate for southeastern cultures. We live with a global "red line" of technological knowledge that we southeasterners are not supposed to cross, for beyond it lie forbidden fruits. If we do acquire any advanced technologies (such as AWACS in the hands of Arabs/Muslims) we must also allow northwestern chaperons to ride along to make sure that we do not misuse the technology that is amongst us, but not of us, and certainly not ours.

"Techno-imperialism will be degrading to the ordinary and good people of the northwest in whose names the world will be conquered by salesman selling dog food cans but also dog food morality that is deceptively packaged in the false rhetoric of ethics, U.N. resolutions, international law and humanitarian intervention."

It is intriguing to note that all the cultures that are deemed menacing pretenders to the nuclear/ballistic/chemical armaments club are southeastern — dangerous, perhaps even demented darkies determined to get their hands on military means that should not be used by non-white, non-Christian, non-industrial cultures. It is also interesting to note that with the possible exception of North Korea and India, virtually all the countries which the northwest is trying to prevent from securing such advanced systems are Arab or Islamic (Iran, Algeria, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan and Sudan, to name only the most obvious). The geo-politics of technological racism coincides alarmingly with the map of Arabism and Islam.

Many people, governments and cultures in the south have

appreciated this disconcerting emerging reality and are showing signs of trying to counter it. Therefore, we notice India pressing ahead with its space and ballistics programmes. China supplying technology to Pakistan and several other Arab/Islamic states. Iran buying weapons systems from Ukraine and others. Iraq laying low buying weapons systems from its scientific and military development until the day it can resume its scientific and military development programmes and Iran trying to develop closer political and military links with assorted countries in Africa and the Levant.

At the same time, the southeastern peoples have started to stand up to the diplomatic muscle that the northwesterners have tried to use to blunt or divert global efforts to redress the imbalances and the double standards that we suffer. The "new international economic order" was thus killed in the 1970s, the international economic order was dismissed in the 1980s, and in the 1990s Euro-Arab dialogue was dismissed in the 1990s on the twin global we now struggle to save chances for progress on the twin global imperatives of environmental protection and human rights.

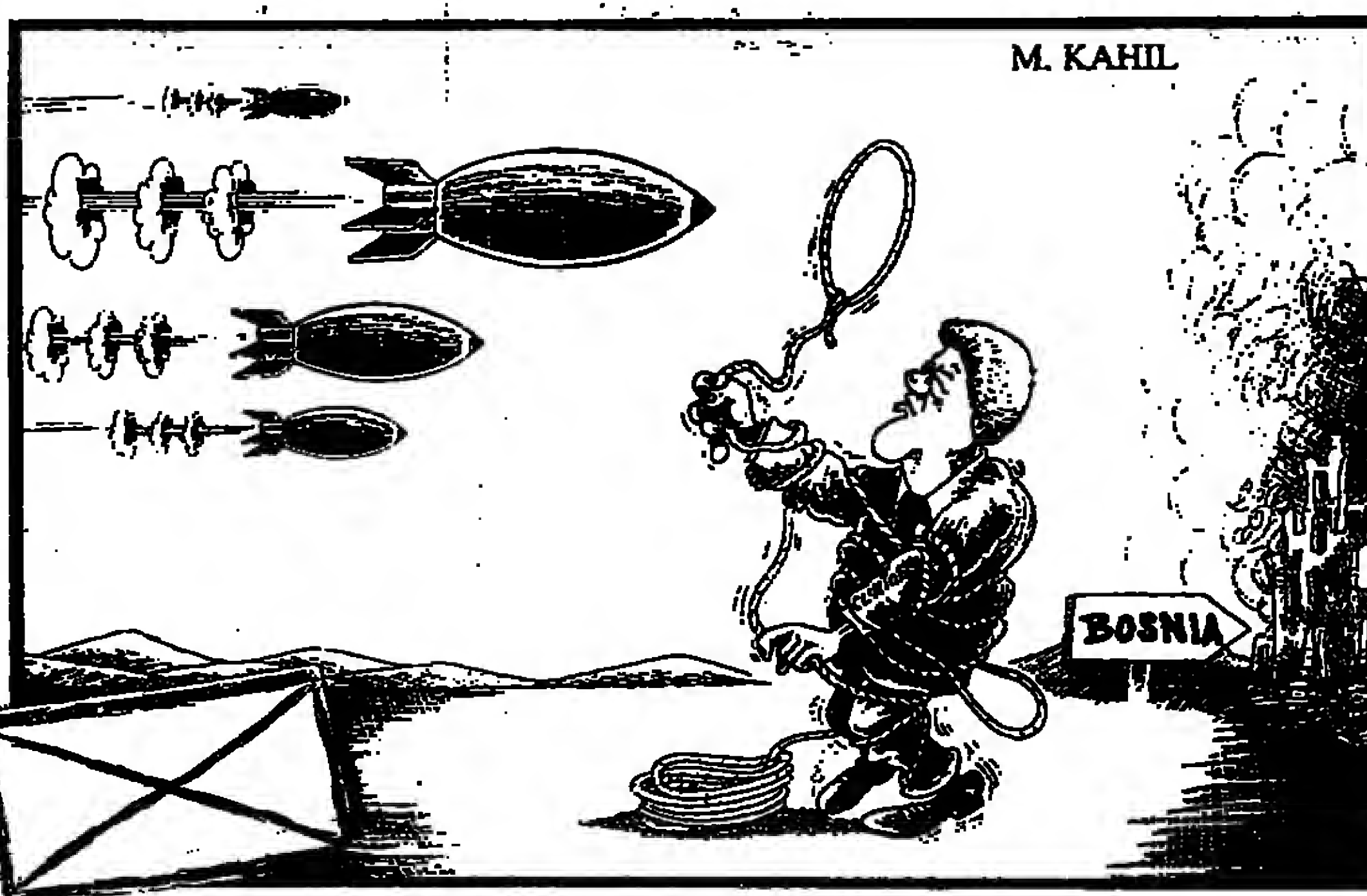
In these and other sectors, the southeast demands that principles of morality and systems of ethically-based political and economic justice be applied equally to all peoples and cultures, regardless of their colour, religion, or economic mode. The northwest appears hesitant to do this, or wishes to do it only according to its own rules, inclinations, fears and whims — as we saw at the Earth Summit in Brazil last year, and as we see in the preparatory talks for the U.N. global human rights conference in Vienna next month.

The northwest's hesitation on these issues is not technical. It is cultural. These buy-and-bite cultures have sent a clear message to the rest of the world in the last several years. Their comfort is the number one global priority, and the survival of others comes next. Like George Bush, they will do anything — no matter how vulgar or vicious — to retain their incumbency, to wield power and to feel good. Should others fall off the edge of the world, that's too bad for them. The politics of non-benign neglect and the diplomatic culture of transnational racism have no room for courtesies. The shopping malls must remain open all night, and the onion ring machines must never falter in their civilisational mission.

The northwestern cultures, especially the United States, have revealed recently a terrifying combination of economic desperation, military dominance, imperial retooling, cultural superiority and technological barbarism/racism — all in a single package that they are trying to market under the false label of "new world order", using the same techniques that have successfully sold millions of roller skates and pizzas in shopping malls. Most of the rest of the world, however, is neither impressed, nor interested to buy into the scheme that is being offered.

The southeastern folk grasp this fact and ponder how to react to it. We wonder what we must do to save our cultures from a new wave of techno-imperialism that may be as vicious and as demeaning to us as were the imperial conquests of the 18th and 19th centuries. But the new wave will also be degrading to the ordinary and good people of the northwest in whose names the world will be conquered by salesman selling dog food cans but also dog food morality that is deceptively packaged in the false rhetoric of ethics, U.N. resolutions, international law and humanitarian intervention. The cultural and ideological battle is engaged; on the one side we have false goods, imperial-racism, and cheapo-cheapo political morality from the northwest; on the other side, we have human beings in the southeast whose visions are neither dazzled by shopping malls nor blinded by the roar of the artillery.

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Could western air power defeat Serbs in Bosnia?

By Charles Aldinger
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Could U.S. and allied warplanes, among the world's most advanced weapons with their laser bombs and heat-seeking rockets, force tough Serb militia fighters to sue for peace in Bosnia?

Military experts and political historians answer with an unresounding "maybe", a far from satisfactory word for politicians deciding how to press Bosnian Serbs to join Muslims and Croats in a U.N.-sponsored peace plan. Analysts say the mountains, forests and cloudy weather in the former Yugoslavia are a far cry from table-top Iraq and Kuwait, where U.S. F-117A "Stealth" bombers and other allied warplanes pounded Iraqi targets successfully in the Gulf war.

U.S. defence sources say North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Pentagon planners have listed potential Serb targets ranging from supply bridges to command and control centres. But experts like David Rowe of the Aspen Group think tank at Harvard University stress that Serb arms can be hidden if U.S. Navy F-18 and A-6 attack jets, Air Force F-15E and F-111 bombers and other American and allied craft launch air strikes.

"Bombing is the candidate of the day because it seems to have

the least number of things wrong with it," Mr. Rowe said. "But it may only change the resolve of people who are born guerrilla fighters if they think it's going to get a lot worse."

President Bill Clinton has pledged that if he decides to use air power, he will have specific, militarily achievable goals over a limited period to present to the American people.

"I would have a very specific, clearly defined strategy to pursue and very clear tactical objectives for the use of that air power, which would have a beginning, a middle and an end," he told reporters.

Tom McNaughton of the private Brookings Institution in Washington said that, while the Bosnian Serbs have virtually no air defences, it would be difficult for warplanes to go after artillery and supply dumps tucked into civilians areas where a misdirected bomb could mean disaster.

Some U.S. military officers, who asked not to be named, say U.S. officials are not sure if Serb General Miroslav Markovic might have been overly optimistic when he told Congress recently that air attacks could be very successful.

They note that cloudy weather is an enemy of laser beams which focus on a target so that bombs can find their way to their mark with electronic eyes.

"Breaking bridges is easy. But once you cut the Serbs off from some of their supplies, you've still

got to destroy the artillery and the stockpiles of weapons," one veteran air force tactician said.

"It can be done, but not as easily as you might think."

Retired army Lieutenant General Ernest Graves of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington said history has repeatedly shown the world that the Yugoslavs do not break easily under fire.

"I'm sure we could hurt them," said Gen. Graves. "But the Nazis couldn't subdue the Yugoslavs in World War II. And the Russians couldn't intimidate them into the Warsaw Pact."

Yugoslav communist partisans fought the occupying German army during the World War II, and after after it Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito defied the Russians and quit the East European Communist bloc dominated by Moscow.

Gen. Graves and others, including both liberals and conservatives in Congress, say Mr. Clinton and western leaders must carefully explore alternatives — such as using the arms embargo against Muslims — before launching U.S. and allied bombers from aircraft carriers and land bases.

"Once you start bombing and it doesn't work, do you walk away and admit defeat?" asked Mr. McNaughton. "Or, do you end up putting tens of thousands of troops on the ground and start shooting to win peace?"

CIS states' brinkmanship over oil and arms spills over into Mideast

By Maria Kielmas

LONDON — An interesting game of brinkmanship has emerged between Russia and the former Soviet republics as all try to develop their oil industries through cooperation with the Middle East as well as western capital. Behind the numerous proposals to construct oil and gas pipelines in every direction is a fight over the control of the former USSR's nuclear weapons and the creation of a tighter union between members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Russian military holds the upper hand in this game and it wants to do business with the Middle East.

Kazakhstan and the Ukraine have been trying to counter Russian pressure on Ukraine to ratify the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-1) and for both republics to cede control of their nuclear weapons to Moscow. Kazakh President Nazarbayev has answered by playing two games in public. He is pushing for a closer economic union between the CIS states, but on the weapons issue siding with Ukraine in opposing Moscow's control. But Kazakhstan has ratified the START-1 treaty. Matters came to a head at the January CIS summit in Minsk when the two states opted for continuing, CIS, not Russian, control over nuclear weapons on their soil.

So it came as no surprise when in February the Russian parliament failed to ratify Russia's participation in a project to build an oil pipeline from Kazakhstan's Tengiz field to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk. This project is being coordinated by the Caspian Pipeline Consortium which involves cooperation between Kazakhstan, Russia, Azerbaijan and Oman. The Russian parliament's failure to ratify the plan clearly was an example of the president and the parliament acting in concert, notwithstanding their arguments over other matters.

Equally unsurprising was news in February that Russia was going to curtail gas supplies to the Ukraine, ostensibly because of an argument over price. There is also an on-off plan to construct a gas pipeline from Iran to Europe via Ukraine. But financing this will be difficult because of the ongoing U.S. embargo on investment in Iran, while significant western investment in Ukraine will be held back until Kiev ratifies the START-1 treaty. Both countries are also deemed such poor credit risks these days that sufficient resources from other investors will

not be forthcoming quickly.

Kazakhstan is also now looking to Iran for a new oil export route and cooperating in oil exploration with Oman. But whatever oil may be found will be of little use until it can be transported out to a market. Western governments' willingness to back the finance for an export route via Iran will not increase following recent reports that Kazakh nuclear weapons have been finding their way to Iran. But it is worth noting that the officer corps of the Kazakhstan army, which is presumably trying to broker the alleged deals, is Russian.

In late February the Interfax news agency reported that the Russian military had suggested the country's oil developments could be financed through weapons sales, with the Middle East cited as one outlet. Since the Russian military's control over the oil sector is growing, it is in a very good position to cut oil-for-

weapons deals with buyer countries.

But the Russians are unlikely to find many buyers in the Arab Gulf countries as the disintegration of the industrial infrastructure throughout the former USSR means that no after-sales service may be provided. This shortcoming did not dissuade Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk from touring Saudi Arabia and Kuwait after the decisive meeting in April in Muscat of OPEC and non-OPEC oil-producing countries.

Even if President Boris Yeltsin, following his narrow victory in the Russian referendum, creates a strong presidency with a rubber-stamp parliament, as he has said he wishes to, the military will continue to be a major power which Yeltsin will have to co-opt further. So the business and the brinkmanship with the Middle East will continue — Middle East International.

LETTERS

Options in a hospital

To the Editor:

Recently I underwent a minor operation on my finger at a private hospital in Amman. The operation took place in the morning, but as a precaution I decided to take a room in the hospital for a few hours, in case I had any reaction to the local anaesthetic or relaxation drugs given to me.

I can assure you it was one of the most frustrating experiences I ever had. Far from feeling that I was in a hospital, I felt more as though I was in an auctioneer's house, so high was the noise level.

In the room adjacent to mine was a family who had recently enjoyed the happy arrival of a baby. The din of their celebration was so loud that it was impossible for me to rest. Although I called nurses on two occasions, and they reassured me they would address the problem, the loud noise stayed on. I can only conclude that they did not ask the people to be quiet or that the "offenders" did not take any notice. One nurse even told me: "they are happy madam." Well, I am happy too, but surely a hospital is not the place for rowdy celebrations.

This letter, however, is not really about one noisy family on one particular day. The lax attitude to visiting in the majority of our country's hospitals can only have a detrimental effect on those people seeking treatment there. Even a layman, such as myself, realises that operations and drugs cannot be the only cure to peoples' illnesses. Rest is very important too.

The majority of doctors in private hospitals in Jordan have been educated abroad and have experienced the very rigid visiting rules in Europe or the U.S. I am sure that they would content to accept this "sok" situation here in Jordan.

However, if doctors and hospitals are happy to accept the status quo, then I feel it is only fair that patients be warned that a resting facility is not available and that it be suggested they stay at home.

Stuart Karmandarian,
P.O. Box 5003,
Amman.

Nkomo in new land war

By Cris Chinaka
Reuters

HARARE — Veteran political fighter Joshua Nkomo is again beating the war drums, more than a decade after leading Zimbabwe's guerrilla campaign for black majority rule.

Mr. Nkomo is still fighting for the cause that drew him into nationalist politics 50 years ago by trying to wrest control of the land and wealth from whites and Indians and place it in the hands of the black majority.

"We are not bringing the whites down or being racist, but we want our people to be like them, up there," he told reporters recently.

The former guerrilla leader conducts his latest battles clad in tailored three-piece suits in boardrooms and conferences across the land, where he has a reputation as an uncompromising negotiator, especially on land deals.

"Land and farming is his first love," a government colleague said.

The grand old man of Zimbabwean politics, a burly figure from the warrior Matebele tribe and one of Zimbabwe's two vice-presidents, has become the most radical voice in a post-independence campaign by blacks to own businesses.

The 75-year-old Nkomo — commonly known as "the old man" or "the bull" for his abrasive style — recently raised the stakes by warning the government of a possible race war if blacks continued to have no major stake in the economy.

Mr. Nkomo has thrown his political weight behind a new business lobby which has been trying to steer blacks from their current major interests in township bottle stores, village grinding mills and small grocery shops into big industries.

With Mr. Nkomo's help, the indigenous Business Development Centre managed in the 1992/93 financial year to squeeze 100 million Zimbabwe dollars (\$15.6 million) in loans from a cash-strapped government to prop up its members.

But Mr. Nkomo, who says his political career spanning more than half a century would be unfulfilled if blacks remained poor, is demanding more concessions for his cause.

He said local authorities should introduce special long-term leases for blacks to acquire business property in towns, arguing that more prosperous whites and Indians had an unfair advantage.

"If we do not do this we shall find ourselves plunged into a pit far greater than the one that ended in 1979," Mr. Nkomo said in reference to a bloody seven-year guerrilla war that ended white minority rule in the Rhodesia and ushered in an independent Zimbabwe in 1980.

Mr. Nkomo and Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe were co-leaders of a 40,000-strong guerrilla army that fought for independence.

"In order to avoid a conflict between the blacks and the well-to-do who are mainly whites, government has to deliberately assist disadvantaged blacks," Mr. Nkomo said.

Zimbabwe's independent Financial Gazette says Mr. Nkomo's views should be taken seriously.

"It is tempting and easy to dismiss these as political posturing but there is a message in all this," said the paper, which is often critical of government policies.

In an editorial, The Weekly said blacks, who comprise 98 per cent of Zimbabwe's 10 million people, had control of only two per cent of the economy.

Financial institutions, it said, had exploited a lack of clear government policy on black advancement to perpetuate traditional ownership patterns.

"It is time both for established white businesses and government to realise that there has been no change in the status of the black person in the economy," it said.

"We cannot go on pretending that everything is okay when it is apparent that there is some silent apartheid."

Mr. Nkomo has led a development trust he formed with several other prominent politicians four years ago to encourage Zimbabweans, mainly blacks, to participate in commercial agriculture, industry, mining and other occupations.

It has used hundreds of millions of dollars from local and international donors to buy business interests across the country, including Zimbabwe's biggest cattle ranch, 862,000 acres (349,000 hectares) in southern Masvingo province.

Mr. Nkomo argues that Zimbabwe's ailing agriculture-based economy can only be revived by involving the majority in commerce and industry, particularly large-scale farming.

China's Muslim minority left behind in oil rush

By Janet Snyder
Reuters

AKSU, China — When China's veteran economic reformer, Deng Xiaoping, said some areas of this vast nation would grow rich faster than others, he spoke the truth.

Here in Xinjiang, the westernmost region of China, it is clear whose wealth is rising rapidly and whose is staying the same.

Uighur minority peasants rumble down unpaved roads from their fields in donkey carts, as Han Chinese — China's majority race — whizz past in Toyota land cruisers and Mercedes Unimog trucks.

Peking's leaders are pressing Xinjiang to forge ahead to develop what are believed to be vast oil reserves under the sands of the nearby Taklimakan desert.

But in their mad dash to make the country rich, Chinese planners are leaving a sizeable sector of the oil region's population in the dust.

Aside from a few truck drivers, virtually no Uighur or other Muslim minority is employed on the oilfields, which look to be Xinjiang's best and brightest hope to enable it to catch up with the galloping prosperity of coastal China.

"The work forces in Xinjiang's oilfields all come from other oilfields in China so we don't take local people," Xinjiang's Vice Governor Wang Lequan told Reuters.

He said there were no minority people on the oil rigs because "in the oil fields elsewhere in China there are no minority populations."

"With development of the oil industry here, we surely will hire minority people, but they must be trained first," Mr. Wang said.

In this isolated corner of a region the size of Western Europe, Uighur farmers till the soil with primitive ploughs drawn by mules or oxen — right in the shadow of the shining oil derricks.

which could some day spell billions of dollars a year for China's coffers.

There are modern conveniences for them. But in vast stretches of the region, whole villages live in darkness after nightfall. There is no electricity.

Throughout the area, people resort to stealing chunks of asphalt from the roads, which they melt down and use to tar their roofs. Houses are made of mud and wattle.

Han Chinese, who tend to live in Xinjiang's cities, are doing much better. In contrast to the Uighurs, Hans have virtually all the trucks and cars and nearly all the farm machinery. Uighur resentment at Han domination periodically erupts into separatist unrest.

China keeps a sizeable military presence in the region to guard against Peking's worst nightmare — the Turkic Uighurs uniting with their cousins across China's borders in a Muslim holy war for independence.

Uighur villagers' income tends to average only 732 yuan (\$128) a year compared with urban residents who make considerably more — an average 2,680 yuan (\$470). In the vast oil-rich Aksu region of southwest Xinjiang, 70 per cent of the 1.74 million population are Uighurs.

Most of the local officials are Hans and plum jobs in the best hotel in Xinjiang are monopolised by Hans.

Education for Uighurs is limited and schools are few, and school-aged children are often seen out in the fields during what should be classroom hours.

The two races rarely mix socially and intermarriage is rare. Uighurs and Chinese tend not to like each other much.

On several occasions during a 2,000 kilometre trek in Xinjiang's Tarim Basin, there was obvious hostility expressed by Uighurs towards Han Chinese who ventured into bazaar.

The feeling was mutual.

ASMARA — As Eritreans mark their newly won independence with boisterous parades and noisy street celebrations, politicians in this former Italian colony are looking with anxiety toward an uncertain future.

A three-day nationwide referendum that ended on April 15 showed nearly unanimous support for independence from Ethiopia, Eritrea's colonial ruler for 30 years. But independence, which will be formally declared on May 24, will not bring respite from the crippling legacy of three decades of civil war.

Three Eritreans in four still rely on donations from international relief agencies to meet their daily food requirements. Tens of thousands more languish in refugee camps awaiting resettlement. The country's industry and infrastructure — including the Red Sea port at Massawa — were largely destroyed during the civil war, which ended two years ago.

The secretary-general of the EPLF and presumptive president of independent Eritrea, Isayas Afewerki, has promised a revision of the code, but has hedged on how far he will go to accommodate international lenders and investors.

"Ideological confusion reigns at the highest levels of the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front), as those who favour redistributive economic policies are pitted against others with more 'free-market' philosophies."

ago when tanks belonging to the rebel Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) rumbled into the capital, driving out the last remnants of the beleaguered Ethiopian army.

Chief among the new government's concerns will be reconstruction, the cost of which is estimated at almost \$2.5bn. The provisional government has had only limited success since liberation in attracting foreign investment. Although the World Bank has stepped in with the first tranche of an aid package worth over \$100m, other lenders have hesitated to commit themselves until statehood is achieved and until

the government embarks on a programme of economic liberalisation.

Ideological confusion reigns at the highest levels of the EPLF, as those who favour redistributive economic policies are pitted against others with more "free-market" philosophies. The EPLF has been committed to a "mixed" economy since 1987, but there is little agreement over what the mixture should contain. An investment code, promulgated in 1991, has been criticised abroad for its requirement that Eritreans hold a majority share in all joint ventures and for its restriction on foreign experts.

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Supporters of the Eritrean Liberation Front, the original anti-Ethiopian guerrilla organisation

Mr. Afewerki is also proceeding slowly on political liberalisation and the move to multi-party democracy. As the dominant institution in Eritrean society, the EPLF has been reluctant to allow rival groups to organise and operate freely. The provisional government has already moved to limit the activities of a private human rights organisation and has suspended publication of the group's newspaper. Other groups complain of harassment and even assassination of their members at home and abroad.

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Lebanon fight for 2-2 draw with Hong Kong

BEIRUT (AFP) — Skirmishes broke out in East Beirut as Lebanon's return to World Cup soccer was clouded by controversy Sunday.

Hong Kong and Lebanese players exchanged blows and angry words on the pitch after a tough penalty decision gave the hosts their second consecutive 2-2 draw on the Asian Group D tournament in the Lebanese capital.

Hong Kong players clearly felt the home side and the intimidating banner-waving capacity 13,000 crowd influenced the Kuwait referee Hamed Al Hindyani to give the 81st minute penalty from which Fadi Alouche scored the equaliser. "Let's just say I am disappointed," said a somber Hong Kong coach Chan Hung Ping after the game.

The players were to have their own inquest of chaotic events which saw substitute Loh Kai Wah sent off in injury time — and four others booked — before making any comment.

"Let's just say they are angry," added Chan.

Even many Lebanese observers reacted sceptically about the fall by one of the Lebanese players in the penalty box. Before then Al Hindyani had resisted many home calls for spot kicks.

The Lebanese players, desperate for an equaliser, had missed several chances as they pressed throughout the final 45 minutes for a second goal.

The stunned crowd turned their fervor at Lebanon hosting its first post civil war sports event on their own players. The chant of "replace the goalkeeper" rang around the ground.

Tension between the two sides started almost straight away. Babkin Melikian went in very

hard for one challenge on Hong Kong goalkeeper Chan Hing-Wing who on recovering produced a brilliant save from another Melikian shot.

But Lebanon pulled back one goal on the stroke of half-time. Wael Nazha crossed the ball which Hong Kong goalkeeper Chan Hing Wing could only fist away and Joulfagi was waiting to smash it in.

Hong Kong spent most of the second half on the defensive but managed some dangerous counter-attacks.

After Alouche's equaliser, the game ended in near chaos with the referee not knowing where to turn to break up fights.

Hong Kong still lead the group D table through after South Korea were held 0-0 by Bahrain in their first group game.

It was a big disappointment for South Korean coach Kim Ho who had predicted before the game that his side would qualify for the deciding Asia zone second round by winning all their matches.

Kim said it may be time to retire some of his players — many of whom are veterans of the trip to the 1990 World Cup finals in Italy.

"Bahrain were very strong. They made it very difficult for us," he said. "It is disappointing but I think we will still qualify alright."

Bahrain coach Sebastiao Pereira commented: "I think we did everyone in the Group A favour with that game. It gives everyone a hope of beating the Koreans. They are not invincible."

Korea put on a listless display and were constantly troubled by attackers such as Khamis Eid Thani.

Women's tour lacks consistent winner

Martinez stuns Sabatini to win Italian Open

ROME (AP) — With Monica Seles off the tour, women's tennis has become a wide open game.

As the French Open approaches, no woman is dominating the scene.

Arantxa Sanchez Vicario came into Rome as the hottest player on the circuit, but she was eliminated by Gabriela Sabatini.

The Argentine star, a darling of Roman fans, was considered a heavy favourite to take her fifth Italian Open title.

But Conchita Martinez, a top 10 player for several years but without a big win, upset Sabatini in two sets, 7-5, 6-1 Sunday to win her first major tournament.

After a women's tournament that failed to produce any taut matches, the men took over the Foro Italico Monday for their \$1.750 million tournament.

Pete Sampras and Jim Courier, the world's No. 1 and No. 2 ranked players, top the draw.

Other top seeds include No. 3 Boris Becker, a three-time Wimbledon champion who has never won on clay, No. 4 Goran Ivanisevic, a Croatian lefthander who was a finalist in Wimbledon last year and the veteran Ivan Lendl at No. 5.

In opening day matches, Ivanisevic faced Jaime Oncins of Brazil on centre court, followed by Sampras against Italy's Renzo Furlan.

Sabatini's loss in Sunday's final disappointed the 10,000 fans at centre court who tried in vain to spur on their "Gaby."

The No. 6 seed, who had earlier ousted No. 2 Martina Navratilova, said she wasn't disturbed by the partisan crowd and stuck to her game plan during the two-hour match.

She acknowledged that Sabatini was "the queen of Rome" and



Gabriela Sabatini

that "maybe before the match I was a little bit scared. But there were some fans for me, too."

Sabatini, the No. 3 seed, said she was tired after a first set that lasted 1 hour and 20 minutes.

"If you don't move well on the court and you don't control the game, you lose," Sabatini said. "More than mentally, I was tired physically."

Martinez, in fact, kept up the pressure from the baseline, while the Argentine scattered her shots long or hit into the net.

"Perhaps I should have taken more risks," said Sabatini, who rarely moved toward the net even though her volley was often successful.

The first set was close — with each player committing more than 20 unforced errors — but when Martinez finally succeeded in closing it out, Sabatini's seemed like she had nothing left.

The Argentine had won the title the last two years, twice beating Monica Seles, and was bidding to tie Chris Evert's record five Italian titles.

The win, worth \$150,000, was the 21-year-old Martinez's third tournament victory this year. Sabatini is so far without a title. She hasn't won a tournament since the Italian Open a year ago in her longest dry spell on the tour since 1986.

Seles was to have been the No. 1 seed, but was stabbed during a tournament in Hamburg, Germany, just three days before it began.

She expected to miss the French Open and maybe Wimbledon.

Stich becomes first German to win German Open since 1964: In Hamburg, a youthful Michael Stich fulfilled a childhood dream Sunday, outlasting Andrei Chesnokov to become the first German in 29 years to capture his country's national tennis championship.

Stich fought off five set points to win the decisive third set tiebreaker, and went on to beat the unseeded Russian 6-3, 6-7, 7-6, 6-4 in the final of the \$1.7 million tournament.

Stich, who was born and grew up in Elmhorn, near Hamburg, broke into tears as he led the crowd of 10,000 that the German Open was the first tournament he had watched as a child.

"I've fulfilled my childhood dream. I've come here with my family to watch this tournament for 15 or 20 years," Stich, gasping for words, said in his victory speech.

After converting his fifth match point to claim victory, Stich leaped into the air with excitement and ran over to hug his wife, Jessica. In the process, he forgot the traditional shake of the loser's hand.

The Russian began to leave the court, and Stich and officials chased after him. Ranked No. 9 in the world two years ago, Chesnokov had not appeared in a final since Indian Wells, California in 1992.

"I haven't been in a final in so long, I forgot there was a victory ceremony," Chesnokov said.

Suns survive Laker threat to advance

PHOENIX (Agencies) — The Phoenix Suns survived the Los Angeles Lakers' bid for the biggest upset in National Basketball Association play-off history Sunday, winning 112-104 in overtime to advance.

Charles Barkley led Phoenix with 31 points and 14 rebounds as the Suns became the first team to rally from two home defeats to win a best-of-five play-off series.

They advanced to a Western Conference semi-final series with San Antonio.

The Lakers were the only team in the play-offs with an overall losing record. They were seeded eighth, but came close to upsetting the top-seeded team in the post-season.

The Lakers tied it at 87-87 with three minutes and 40 minutes left as James Worthy made three jump shots and a three-point shot in four and a half minutes.

Los Angeles then went ahead for the first time since the second period, but Barkley came back with a jump shot and Dan Majerle tied it 95-95 with seconds left.

The other Western Conference semi-finalists, Houston and Seattle, start their best-of-seven series Monday night.

In Richfield, Ohio, Brad Daugherty scored 24 points, grabbed 20 rebounds and had eight assists to lead the Cavaliers past the Nets.

The Cavs will play the two-time defending champion Chicago Bulls in the Eastern Conference semifinals beginning Tuesday in Chicago.

In New York, Patrick Ewing scored 33 points Sunday as the New York Knicks posted a 111-95 victory over the Charlotte Hornets in the first game of the National Basketball Association



Suns' star Charles Barkley chatting with a referee

Eastern Conference semi-finals.

The Hornets, in the play-offs for the first time in their five-year history, led most of the game, but they were hurt by the absence for much of the game of All-Star Larry Johnson.

Van Basten guides AC Milan back to winning ways

PARIS (AFP) — There was no room for error this weekend as Europe's top clubs came under increasing pressures as they continued to chase their respective league titles.

Everyone was all too aware that the slightest mistake could prove fatal.

While Marco Van Basten tried to help AC Milan recover their winning ways in Italy, and Marseille continued to fend off the challenge of Paris St. Germain in France — Spanish legends Real Madrid dropped what could prove to be a vital point in their local derby match with Rayo Vallecano, and Dutch hopefuls Feyenoord fell apart against Ajax leaving PSV Eindhoven a clear run at the title.

In Germany Werder Bremen beat UEFA Cup finalists Borussia Dortmund 1-0 and joined Bayern Munich on top of the table with just four matches left to play. Bayern cracked and were held to a 0-0 draw by lowly Nuremberg.

Marco Van Basten, starting his first match for AC Milan since December 13, scored one of his side's three goals at Ancona in a result which virtually assured the Italian pacemakers of retaining the Italian title.

Van Basten's Dutch team-mate Frank Rijkaard opened the scoring after 20 minutes before the European "player of the year" marked his return with a superb header, seven minutes before the break.

An own-goal by the Czech Milos Gionex just after half-time made it 3-0 and it was left to Sebastiano Vecchiola to score a consolation goal for the home side just before the hour.

Internazionale, who have cut the gap at the top from 11 to four points in recent weeks, kept up the pressure with a 2-0 defeat of Lazio.

The Uruguayan Ruben Sosa, who is expected to make way for Holland's Dennis Bergkamp next season, opened the scoring with his 17th goal of the season and Salvatore "Pato" Schillaci added the second after 39 minutes.

Roberto Baggio's outstanding run of form continued with a hat-trick in a 4-2 for Juventus over Foggia.

In the Netherlands, Ajax gave their old rivals PSV Eindhoven a helping hand on their way to a third consecutive Dutch Championship by destroying Feenooord 5-2.

Three goals in the first half-hour put Ajax in control of the match and could have dealt a fatal blow to Feyenoord's title hopes.

With four games remaining Feyenoord are now one point behind PSV who have a game in hand. A 36th minute goal from Romania's George Popescu and an own-goal just before half-time gave PSV a comfortable 2-0 win over Deventer Go Ahead Eagles.

Real Madrid's 1-1 draw could also prove to be a deadly blow to their title hopes. The result enabled rivals Barcelona to move one point clear after an impressive 4-1 home victory against first division strugglers Cadiz.

Barcelona made no mistakes against Cadiz. Stoichkov scored his first goal in over two months in the 23rd minute while Barcelona's other scorers were Beguiristain (45), Banero (60) and Koeman (88-pen).

Mexico 1st to qualify for World Cup

TORONTO (AP) — "Mexico, Mexico, rah, rah, rah."

A crowd of jubilant Mexicans created a pedestrian jam across the street from varsity stadium Sunday afternoon, chanting and waving flags in celebration of a 2-1 victory by their country's national soccer team over Canada that clinched a World Cup berth.

Francisco Cruz, sent in as a substitute in the 60th minute, drilled home a low shot with five minutes remaining, only five minutes after he laid sprawled on the ground from a collision with Canadian goalkeeper Craig Forrest.

"When I was told to go into the game one of the coaches told me, 'it is there, get into the game and score,' and I did it," a happy Cruz said through an interpreter

in a champagne-soaked Mexican dressing room.

The teams traded first-half goals: Alex Bounie for Canada and Hugo Sanchez for Mexico.

Seven yellow cards came out in the victory, in front of 20,000 spectators, made Mexico the first team to clinch a berth in the World Cup finals, defending champion Germany and the host United States get in automatically.

It gave Mexico a 5-0-1 record in the final round of Concacaf qualifying, three points ahead of Canada and even further ahead of El Salvador and Honduras.

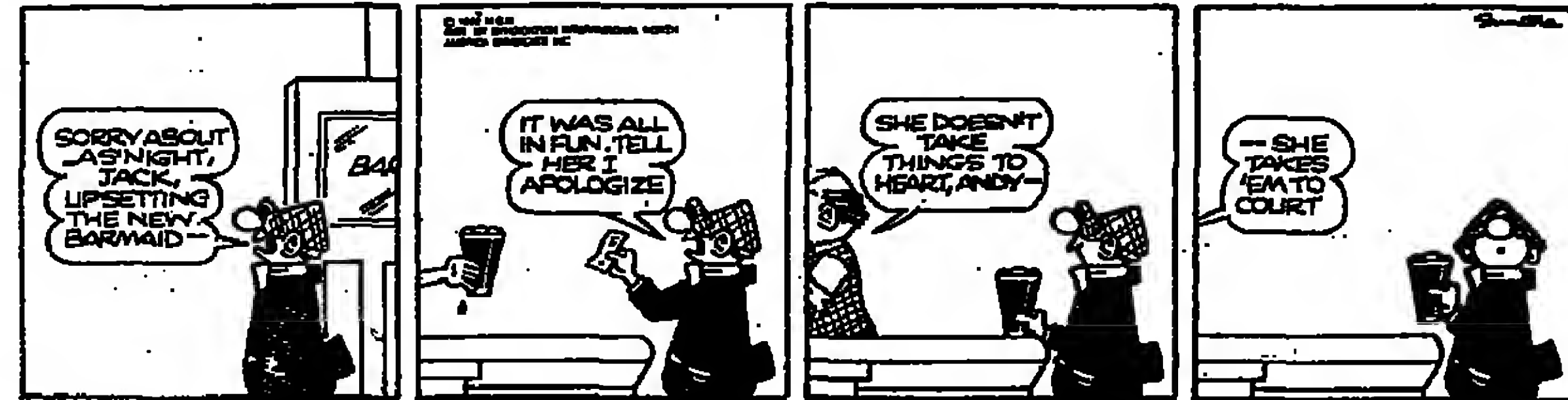
The berth is Mexico's 10th trip to the World Cup, but their first since 1986 when, playing at home, it advanced all the way to the quarterfinals.

It didn't make the 1990 World Cup because it was barred for using an overage player in a youth tournament.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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FINESSERS' PARADISE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 7 6
♥ 8 6
♦ 5 4 3
♣ K Q J 5

WEST
♠ Q 9 2
♥ K J 3
♦ A 10 8
♣ 9 8 7 3

EAST
♠ 10 5 4 3
♥ 10 7 5 4 2
♦ Q J 9 6
♣ Void

SOUTH
♠ A K J
♥ A Q 9
♦ K 7
♣ A 10 6 . 2

The bidding:
South West North East
2 NT Pass 3 NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Nine of ♠.
If there is a Garden of Eden for finessers, they will constantly be dealt hands such as South's with finesses in three suits — and all will work. Unfortunately, life is not quite so idyllic. This hand from Mexico's Team Trials, reported by Dr. George Rosenkranz, is almost too vivid an illustration.

Even those using a 22-24 range

for a two-no-trump opening bid should take that action with the South hand — the fifth club more than compensates for the missing one point. North's raise to game is automatic.

At one table declarer had a hard-luck story to tell. The first trick was won in dummy and a spade to the jack lost to the queen. Undaunted, declarer won the club return on the table and tried a heart to the queen — still unfortunate. Declarer used dummy's third club entry for a diamond to the king. That enabled the defenders to take four diamond tricks and one in each major for a two-trick set.

When Alicia Duran, whose team went on to win the event, sat South, she won the same opening club lead and immediately ended on the table. Then came a low heart to the nine — a textbook play. West could win the trick cheaply, but was employed. No matter which suit West selected to return it would present declarer with the game-going trick.

Once again, Oscar Wilde's epigram holds true: Life imitates Art.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY MAY 11, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A good day for quick action and putting into operation decisions that are vital to your progress. You can also further your career through social channels and have a heck of a good time in the process.

ARIES: March 21 to April 19 All kinds of interesting behind the scenes conferences with any members of your family can yield excellent results so get together amicably.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can join today with friends, acquaintances and usual associates in whatever joint activities requiring a harmonious approach between you and them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Depend upon one who is experienced in property matters to give you answers that can help you to have more of this world's goods with ease.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Look for those various new outbursts by which you can make your own intentions more on actual working reality and put in motion right away.

LEO: (July 22 August 21) A private meeting with one who is experienced in business interests that are important to you is available and willing to give you the benefit of experience.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Close companions, partners and associates are willing to go

along with a plan you have in mind if you present it from its biggest scope of action.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Take some time out to find out just what one who understands homes would do to lighten and brighten up your environmental surroundings.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Consider well the various pleasures you like and how they can be approached from a new angle so they can be even more enjoyable in the future.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If you give your home members a little more affection and some compliments on the good things that they do, much greater accord will be present.

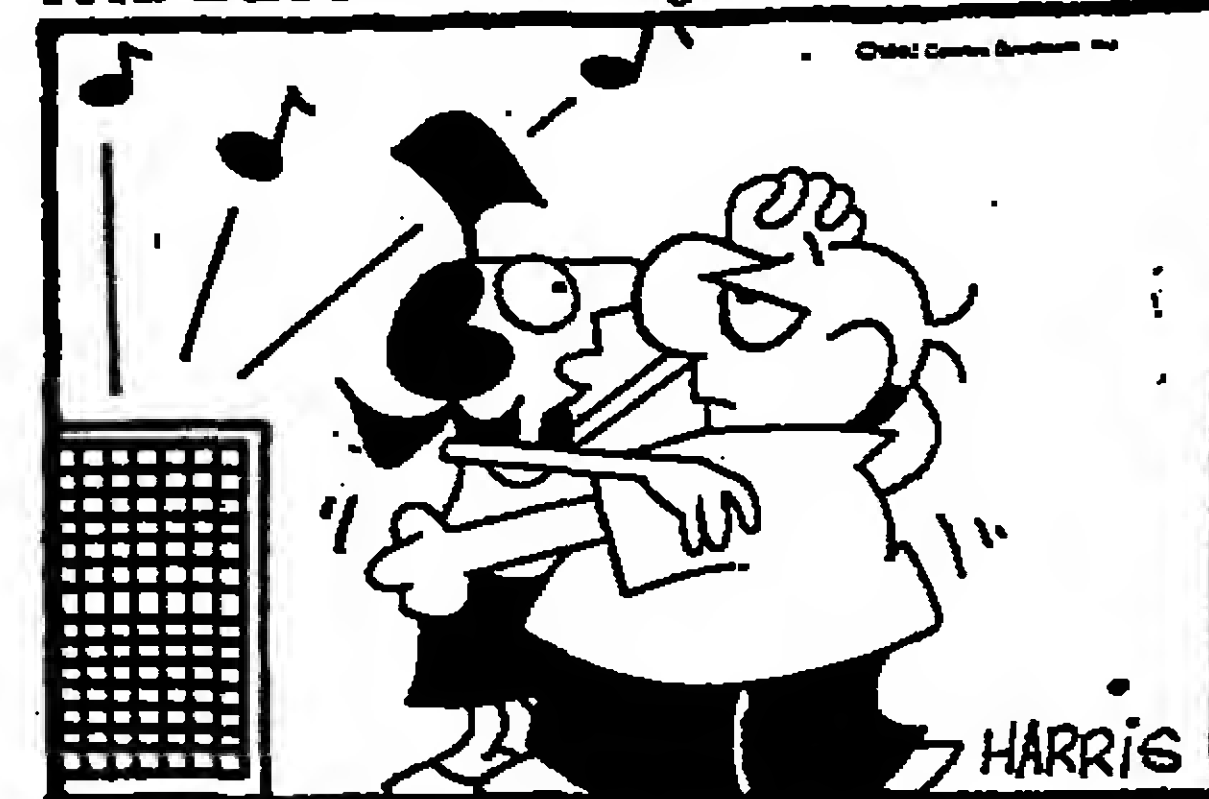
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You need to be more communicative as to your real wishes and points of view with a partner who gets pretty emotional without full knowledge of circumstances.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you adopt a new and more efficient schedule where your daily occupation is concerned you will find that your bank account will reflect that change.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Consider well the good times you like for what you can do today can have a profound bearing upon the enjoyment you have in the days ahead for you.

THE BETTER HALF

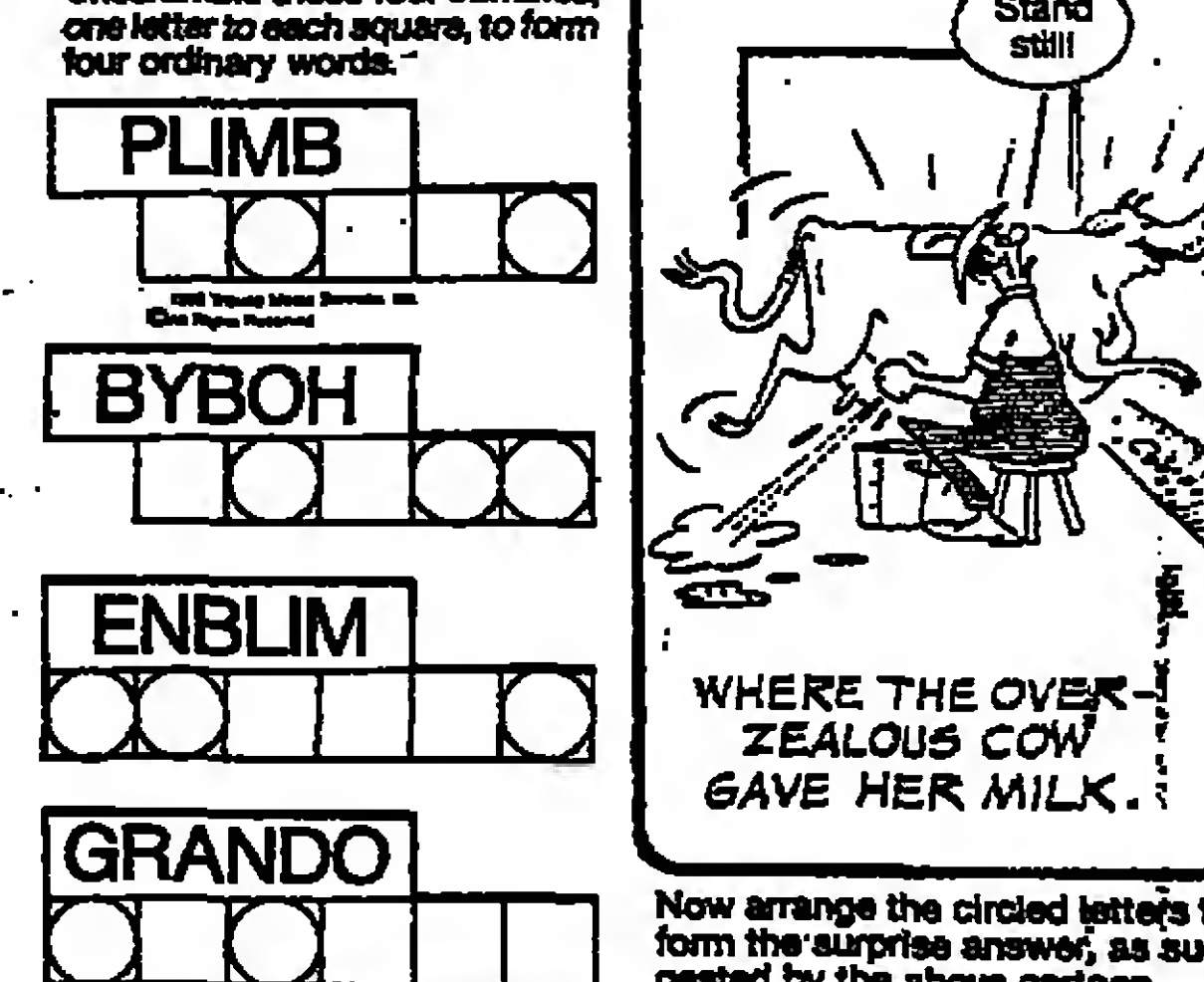
By Harris



"I'm not saying you're dull, Stanley...but who else would slow-dance to 'Great Balls of Fire'?"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



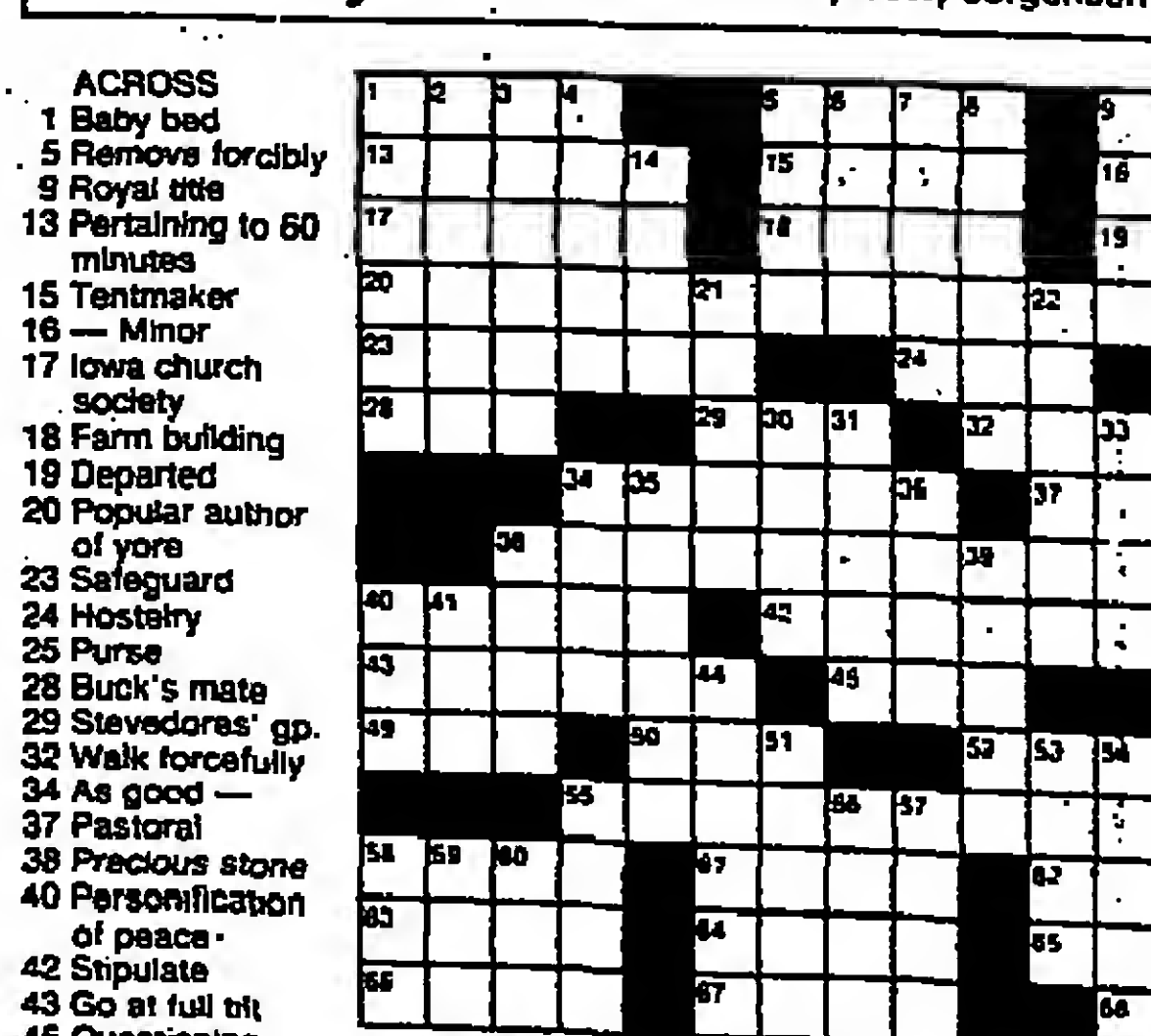
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: OOOOOO THE "OOOOO"

Yesterday's Jumbles: MEALY GUESS PURIFY ENTAIL

Answer: We close our eyes to this — SLEEP

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

POSSIBLE ANSWERS FOR THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE:
1. BIRD
2. FISH
3. INSECT
4. MAMMAL
5. REPTILE
6. AMPHIBIAN
7. MAMMAL
8. BIRD
9. FISH
10. INSECT
11. MAMMAL
12. REPTILE
13. AMPHIBIAN
14. MAMMAL
15. BIRD
16. FISH
17. INSECT
18. MAMMAL
19. REPTILE
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21. MAMMAL
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Bosnian 'allies' clash again; Serbia slams door on Karadzic

SARAJEVO (R) — Muslim and Croat forces clashed in Mostar for the second straight day Monday as smoke from fires sparked by the fighting drifted over the ancient southwest Bosnian city.

A United Nations spokesman said the battles between the erstwhile allies were a cause of grave concern as there was a danger the fighting could spread to other areas of central Bosnia.

Belgrade meanwhile stepped up pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to accept an international peace plan for Bosnia by banning senior rebel Serbs, including their leader Radovan Karadzic, from crossing the frontier into Serbia.

"We are very sad about that decision of Yugoslavia," Dr. Karadzic told Reuters Television. "We know that they are squeezed and blackmailed but still it's too strong a measure."

In a report from the besieged town of Zepa, U.N. military observers said thousands of people had fled the eastern Bosnian enclave after several days of bombardment by the Bosnian Serbs, leaving only 50 people in the town.

Zepa's original population of 6,000 was swollen to an estimated 30,000 by an influx of refugees from other Muslim areas in the region that have been rolled up by advancing Serb forces.

U.N. Protection Force spokesman Commander Barry Frewer, giving details of what the observers had found, said: "The township itself is almost deserted. The majority of the houses have been badly damaged."

He added: "There has been heavy fighting, heavy shelling, people have fled into the hills."

John MacMillan, a spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner

for Refugees, said: "If the situation as reported in Zepa is correct then it is a human catastrophe of the greatest magnitude."

"If there are only 50 people wandering around in a town which had 6,000 people then it boggles the mind what will be necessary to provide them with humanitarian aid."

The observers' report, relayed by U.N. spokesman Commander Frewer, was the first independent confirmation of Muslim claims that Zepa came under fierce Serb shelling from last Tuesday.

The Bosnian Serb and Muslim-led government army agreed on Saturday to declare Zepa and another enclave, Srebrenica, demilitarised areas.

The commanders also signed a general ceasefire for their forces in Bosnia. The truce appeared to be generally holding Monday, with only 12 artillery impacts recorded in Sarajevo by the United Nations Protection Force.

That agreement did not include the Bosnian Croats, whom the U.N. blamed for starting the latest bout of close-quarter fighting with Muslim forces in Mostar Sunday.

The Bosnian Croat Forces (HVO) rounded up about 400 Muslims from the town and were holding them prisoner in a village outside Mostar, a U.N. spokesman said.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio, which accused the HVO of "ethnic cleansing" in the city, also reported that the Bosnian government had called on all able-bodied men to join its forces in Mostar.

Croatia, which rejects suggestions that it is involved in the war in neighbouring Bosnia, called on

Croat and Muslim leaders to stop the fighting, which breached a Muslim-Croat ceasefire agreement reached in Zagreb two weeks ago.

"I condemn most sharply the armed conflicts between Muslims and Croats, and call on you to make every effort to bring them to an end," said Croatian President Franjo Tudjman in a letter to Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban.

The U.N. said it was worried the Mostar fighting could upset a fragile Muslim-Croat truce in nearby central Bosnia.

"This is of the gravest concern," said Commander Frewer. "If it continues it has the potential to destabilise our previous ceasefire. It has the potential, if not checked, of creeping northwards into central Bosnia."

The public slap in the face delivered to Dr. Karadzic by Serbian-led Yugoslavia appeared to be a direct retaliation for Dr. Karadzic's refusal to bow to pressure from Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to sign the Bosnian peace plan.

By barring him from entry into neighbouring Serbia, Mr. Milosevic appeared to have effectively confined Dr. Karadzic within his self-declared rebel Serb Republic.

European Community (EC) foreign ministers met Monday to discuss how to pressure Bosnian Serbs into accepting an international peace plan that would end the 13-month-old war, including the possible use of force.

But a new ceasefire pact and renewed fighting between Croats and Muslims have taken some of the urgency from discussions ab-

out whether the West should use limited military force such as air strikes in Bosnia.

International mediator Lord Owen, one of the chief architects of the peace plan, said it was too early to say whether Serbia would honour a pledge to cut off supplies to the Bosnian Serbs who rejected the plan last week.

But he said there were signs that Serbia was no longer trying to ride what he called "the dangerous tiger of nationalism" and that the West should focus more on the peace plan than on the debate about military intervention.

"You don't want military action to be seen as a solution to the problem. It is not," he told reporters before briefing the 12 EC nations.

EC ministers arriving for the meeting said they hoped the new U.N.-brokered ceasefire between government forces and the Bosnian Serbs, to which the Croats were not party, would hold.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told reporters the West was still not ruling out any options, including that of military action, to try and force an end to the war.

But he said efforts should now focus on making sure Serbia kept its promise to cut off vital supplies from the Bosnian Serbs after their rejection last week of the U.N.-sponsored peace plan that would divide Bosnia into 10 regions.

The emphasis now is on pressure on the Bosnian Serbs via Serbia," Mr. Hurd said. "We have to test that... we have to be sure that (Serbian President Slobodan) Milosevic is applying the pressure."

He said efforts should now focus on making sure Serbia kept its promise to cut off vital supplies from the Bosnian Serbs after their rejection last week of the U.N.-sponsored peace plan that would divide Bosnia into 10 regions.



Sarajevo's Muslim children offer flowers to a young Ukrainian soldier to express their gratitude for protecting the besieged town of Zepa for which he is about to depart (AFP photo)

Cambodia royalists attack Khmer Rouge

PHNOM PENH (Agencies) — Royalist Cambodian guerrillas and the hardline Khmer Rouge, long-time allies in their country's civil war, exchanged artillery fire over the weekend in the north-west, U.N. officials said Monday.

The fighting was apparently prompted by the killing of a Japanese police officer by Khmer Rouge guerrillas in a zone nominally controlled by the monarchy on May 4, they said.

A senior officer at the headquarters of the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) said it appeared that guerrillas of ANKI (the Royalist Army for an Independent Kampuchea) had fired the first shot.

The artillery exchanges took place in Ampil district of Banteay Meanchey province close to the Thai border about 370 kilometres west of the capital Phnom Penh.

"It would appear that it was after the ambush of the Japanese and Dutch that they (the guerrilla factions) fell out of accord," a U.N. officer said.

The Japanese policeman was killed when the Khmer Rouge attacked a U.N. convoy in the guerrilla zone. Two Japanese police officers and five Dutch marine commandos were wounded.

ANKI and the Khmer Rouge

were allied, albeit sometimes uneasily, throughout the 13 year civil war which ended in 1991 when all four rival factions signed a U.N.-sponsored peace agreement.

The accord paved the way for the deployment of the 22,000-strong UNTAC force to organise elections scheduled for May 23-27.

The Khmer Rouge is rejecting participation in the elections saying they will serve only to legitimise the Hanoi-installed Phnom Penh government, its sworn enemy.

The radical guerrilla group has vowed to use violence to disrupt the poll.

The guerrillas have staged attacks in northwest, central, southern and eastern provinces in the past week.

Soldiers from the Pakistan peacekeeping contingent killed at least two Khmer Rouge attackers and wounded several others involved in an assault on their position at Chom Kasang in far north Preah Vihear province Saturday.

"The attackers first attacked at 5 a.m. using mortars and small arms. The peacekeepers returned fire forcing their assailants to withdraw," a U.N. spokesman said.

He said two subsequent Khmer

Rouge attacks were repulsed and that one peacekeeper was lightly wounded by shrapnel in the back. U.N. buildings and vehicles were damaged during the attack, he said.

Meanwhile, a Japanese cabinet minister asked the U.N. mission chief Monday for increased security for Japanese peacekeepers.

Some of whom want to be withdrawn in the face of escalating violence.

The U.N. Chief, Yasushi Akashi, who is also Japanese, told reporters, "The outcome is very good" after nearly two hours of talks with Home Affairs Minister Keijiro Murata.

U.N. officials have attempted to play down Mr. Murata's visit as it clearly indicates Japan is questioning the U.N. mission's ability to protect its members during U.N.-sponsored elections.

In Tokyo, Defence Minister Toshio Nakayama said Monday he may order Japanese troops to withdraw from Cambodia if violence continues after U.N.-sponsored elections scheduled for late May.

Mr. Nakayama told a news conference an elected government in Cambodia would not necessarily bring an end to the attacks in which two Japanese, a civilian volunteer and a police officer, have died.

2 more join Pakistan interim cabinet

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Prime Minister Balakh Sher Mazari has inducted two more cabinet level officials, raising the strength of his caretaker government to 60, officials here said Monday.

Abdul Ghafur Hoti was sworn in as interior minister late Sunday while Khwaja Tariq Rahim was named a special assistant to the prime minister with the rank of minister, they said.

Mr. Mazari, 65, was appointed caretaker prime minister for 90 days by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan after he sacked Premier Nawaz Sharif and dissolved the National Assembly on April 18.

He had already 58 members in his cabinet, described as the largest in the country's political history.

His broad-based set-up, called a government of "national consensus," is a multi-party coalition of heterogeneous elements, mostly opposed to the former prime minister.

Defending the record size of his cabinet, Mr. Mazari had said it would eliminate the possibility of fraud in elections set for July 14.

New Interior Minister Hoti had been leading the dissident faction of Mr. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML) which backed

Mr. Ishaq Khan during a bitter three-month tussle on the presidency's sweeping powers which climaxed with the last month's dismissal of the reformist prime minister.

He was aspiring for the PML presidency which fell vacant with the death of Mohammad Khan Junejo in March.

But in a surprising move the pro-president PML Sunday elected Communication Minister Hamid Nasir Chathra its president.

Mr. Chathra had fired the first salvo against Mr. Sharif when he resigned as former planning minister. Eight more deserted Mr. Sharif later, splitting the PML in pro- and anti-president camps.

Analysts said Mr. Hoti had been given the important Interior Ministry after he failed to get the party presidency.

Mr. Rahim is a close aide of former opposition leader Benazir Bhutto whose party has joined the caretaker government in strength.

Ms. Bhutto denied Sunday she had sacrificed her political ideals by working with the president who dismissed her government and accused her of corruption.

In an interview with the British

Broadcasting Corporation's Breakfast With Frost programme, Ms. Bhutto said she had no real choice but to work with Mr. Ishaq Khan.

"I think one has to deal with the art of the possible," said Ms. Bhutto, who vigorously denies the corruption charges.

Ms. Bhutto said the elections were an opportunity for the opposition.

"We have a certain situation in Pakistan and then we ourselves have been calling for elections. We can hardly turn around and say to the president we no longer want these elections we've always been demanding," she said.

Ms. Bhutto said she and her husband, who still face criminal charges that she says were trumped up, had refused to leave politics in 1990 at the request of the government.

"We didn't bargain for ourselves. We could have made a personal deal at any time," she said.

"I was told that if I didn't my husband would be arrested and cases would be made against me. When asked who had made the threats, Ms. Bhutto answered: 'It was the whole, the president, the prime minister, everybody was together at that time.'"

Peru general charged with insubordination

LIMA (R) — Peru's highest military court has charged a general who fled the country with insubordination and other crimes for accusing the head of the armed forces of having links with a death squad.

The Supreme Council of Military Justice said General Rodolfo Robles had accused army chief General Nicolas Hermoza and other officers of committing "punishable and dishonourable acts without providing any proof whatsoever."

It said Gen. Robles, who fled to Argentina Friday, had known the council was investigating the disappearance of nine students and a professor last July but neglected to pass along related information to investigators.

Gen. Robles was charged with insubordination, insulting a superior, abuse of authority, falsehood, causing harm to the nation and desertion.

His two sons, both army officers who accompanied Gen. Robles to Buenos Aires after he claimed they were being threatened, were also charged with desertion.

In a television interview Saturday Gen. Robles reiterated explosive charges contained in a document handed to the press before he flew to Argentina Friday.

He charged that Gen. Hermoza was aware that an army intelli-

gence unit, coordinated by National Intelligence Service officer Vladimir Montesinos, was carrying out operations involving rights abuses.

He said the alleged death squad had killed nine students and a professor at a university last July and 14 people at a fundraising party in Lima in November 1991.

Neither Gen. Hermoza nor Gen. Montesinos, who rarely appears in public, have commented on the charges. But on Thursday the army said it would send the document to the military court "despite the falsehoods of the charges it contains."

Gen. Robles said he learned of the killings in January and only made the information public when he realised there would be no attempt at a serious investigation by the military.

"I am denouncing this before international public opinion and if necessary I will go the United States or wherever," he said, when asked if he would testify before the U.S. Congress.

The United States has focused on the November 1991 killings as well as eight other human rights cases, saying it would like to see the cases thoroughly investigated before providing further economic aid to Peru.

Well-informed diplomats have spoken of an unwillingness by the

Peruvian government to press ahead with the probe.

Meanwhile the mothers of two Peruvian journalists detained on terrorism charges joined five others in their fifth day of a hunger strike Sunday to demand the release of eight detained journalists.

The mothers of Rosa Neyra and Jose Alvarez, two journalists who were part of the now-defunct newspaper Cambio, began the strike sponsored by the Journalists Guild Sunday, Guild Dean Miguel Angel Calderon said.

Three of the strikers had been taken to local clinics at the weekend due to their fragile health, he said.

"Peru's judiciary, which has yet to resolve the case of the journalists, will be held responsible for the health of the strikers," he said.

President Alberto Fujimori at the weekend reiterated his belief that Danilo Quijano, a journalist for La Republica newspaper condemned last month on terrorism charges, is innocent.

But he said the case is in the hands of the courts.

All of the eight have been linked by anti-terrorism police to the pro-Cuban Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement.

The hunger strikers also called for full press freedom and the end to what they called harassment of journalists and media outlets.

COLUMN

Politicians who lost get counselling

CANBERRA (AP) — Unhappy politicians voted out of office here are seeking psychological help. The Association of Former Members of the Parliament of Australia said Monday it has hired a sports psychologist for counselling.

"It is not easy to adjust after the hectic life of long hours, travel and dedication to public duty," said Tony Lamb, secretary of the association.

Sports psychologist Jeffrey Bond said a politician who loses at the polls can suffer as much as a top athlete who loses at the Olympics," he said. "They're very driven people... it can be quite a blow."

Voters kicked out 17 politicians from the 222-member parliament in a March 13 general election. Another 18 retired before voting started.

Malaysian deputy prime minister's car stolen

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — A hitchhiker has stolen Deputy Prime Minister Ghafor Baba's official Mercedes Benz. Kuala Lumpur's police chief said, Chief Henry Chin said Mr. Ghafor's driver reported that when he was caught in a traffic jam last Friday, a man asked for a lift. The driver later stopped at a bank to cash a check, leaving the man in the car and the engine running. Chief Chin said. When the driver came out of the bank, the car had disappeared, the police chief said. He said police were looking for the man and the car.

House burns while teenagers play computer games

NORTH TIDWORTH, England (R) — Two teenager British brothers were so absorbed in their computer game that they failed to notice their house was on fire, the family said. Wayne Turner, 19, and his 17-year-old brother James left their toast to burn under a grill while they played with the game. A fire broke out and spread to most of the lower floor of their house in southwestern England. "I felt like throwing the game out of the window but I didn't have any windows left," their mother, Susan Turner, told reporters.

English punter wins \$790,000 in record bet

LONDON (R) — An English businessman won £500,000 (\$790,000) in a world record soccer bet Saturday night after Cardiff clinched promotion from division three. Jimmy Wright, a 77-year-old coach firm owner, scooped his fortune after laying a £1,000 (\$1,580) bet with a bookmaker in August predicting Cardiff, Stoke and Newcastle would win their respective English League titles. Newcastle and Stoke had already secured promotion from division one and two, respectively, and Cardiff obliged with a 3-0 win at Scunthorpe.

Immigrant resorts to 'fax terrorism' in Sweden

STOCKHOLM (R) — A man seeking Swedish citizenship resorted to what police called "fax terrorism" in a desperate attempt to bring his case to the attention of immigration authorities — and finally got his papers. "He sent fax after fax, kilo after kilo of paper so no one could get through," said Nils Nilsson, a police spokesman in Norrköping, where the immigration board is located. The faxes said: "Director-general, get a move on your workers." He has been charged with conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace, police said. He was later granted citizenship.

Parents charged over baby in microwave

PITTSBURGH (R) — A 7-week-old baby was "nuked" in a microwave oven for two seconds but suffered no ill effects, a newspaper reported Friday. The child's parents were charged with neglect. "The kid is fine. They're making a big deal out of nothing," the father, Timothy Ketterman, 22, was quoted as saying by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

The baby was placed in the microwave by the infant's 14-year-old cousin, who said he did it as a joke. He was charged with recklessness endangerment and was sent to a psychiatric clinic. The incident took place on April 21, but was not reported to the police until May 1.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Russian defence minister in Turkey

ANKARA (AP) — The Russian Defence Minister arrived Monday for a five-day stop and the first formal visit in two centuries by an official from Russia, a traditional foe of Turkey. Turkey's Defence Minister, Nevzat Ayaz, said the countries would sign a military cooperation agreement under a broader accord reached a year ago. He said he and his Russian counterpart, Pavel Grachev, also would discuss the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and the strife between Bosnian Serbs and Muslims. "We aim to promote ties with every country which rejects aggression as a policy... and in this context, Turkey is a country to which we attach special importance," Mr. Grachev said at the airport. Turkey, which has close ethnic bonds with Azerbaijan, has recently launched a joint initiative with the United States and Russia to end the five-year conflict between its Caucasian neighbours over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. It has also supported U.S. calls for military intervention to end the Serb attacks on Turkey's fellow Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Corsica rocked by 6 blasts

AJACCIO, France (AFP) — Six bomb explosions rocked Corsica early Monday, causing extensive damage to offices of the regional administration and homes belonging to island politicians, police said. No one was hurt in the attacks, but the junior prefect (governor) was in his offices in Sartene, southern Corsica, when while three explosions ripped through the building. Two villas belonging to Socialist politicians on the island were damaged in separate bombings, a restaurant and two homes belonging to nationalists from the French mainland were severely damaged in another explosion. Sources on the island said the attacks were not politically motivated and did not aim to send a message to the new centre-right government of Prime Minister Edouard Balladur.

Twisters strike Texas

NEW YORK (AP) — Residents of an Oklahoma city neighbourhood watched helplessly as a flash flood swept a man and a young girl out of a car to their apparent deaths. A woman left behind drowned as water from a raging creek filled the automobile. "God, what could anybody do?" said one horrified bystander, Sandra Niles. "I wanted to jump in, but I knew if I did that would be the end of me." Violent storms that stretched across the southern plains over the weekend sent rivers and creeks spilling over their banks in Kansas and Oklahoma. Meanwhile, tornadoes smashed into the Dallas area Sunday, killing at least one person and injuring more than 60 others. In Suburban Wylie, 40 kilometres northeast of Dallas, the tornado cut through the town's business centre and forced the closure of a hospital. One person was found dead at a mobile home park, said city manager Steve Norwood.

Success is near in transition — De Klerk

JOHANNESBURG (R) — President F. W. De Klerk said Monday South Africa was on the verge of a breakthrough in its transition to democracy. "I believe that our vision of a just, stable and prosperous South Africa will soon become a reality," he told a conference on racial science in Pretoria. "We are on the brink of a breakthrough." He did not elaborate, but South Africa's main political players committed themselves Friday to holding the country's first all-race elections within 12 months. The govern-

ment, the African National Congress, the Inkatha Freedom Party and other groups participating in democracy negotiations adopted a declaration of intent saying they would agree broad constitutional principles within four weeks. Only two of the 26 delegations, the right-wing white Conservative Party and the tiny black homeland of Ciskei, opposed the declaration.

21 die in Bangkok toy factory fire

BANGKOK (AFP) — At least 21 people died and more than 100 were injured when fire swept through a Bangkok toy factory Monday, the state-run Thai News Agency said. Fire fighters were still trying to put out the blaze at the doll factory early evening, and until they did it was impossible to determine the exact number of casualties, a police officer said. An official at a local hospital said more than 100 factory workers, most of them women, were injured either by the fire or while jumping from windows of the four-storey building to escape the flames. A distraught survivor told a local radio station that she was working with about 800 people on the fourth floor of the building when the fire broke out mid afternoon. The factory collapsed during the blaze and rescue workers at the scene told reporters they were sure more bodies would be found in the rubble.

Campbell leads in Canada leadership race

OTTAWA (R) — Canadian Defence Minister Kim Campbell has a commanding lead over her main rival Environment Minister Jean Charest in the race to succeed Brian Mulroney as Conservative Party and prime minister, a survey showed. As selection of delegates to a party convention closed at the weekend, the Canadian press news agency said Mr. Campbell had 44 per cent of the committed delegates and Mr. Charest 24 per cent. However, the survey showed another 27 per cent of the delegates were still undecided and could back either candidate at the convention that will pick Mr. Mulroney's successor on June 13 in Ottawa. "We are on target," Mr. Campbell's campaign spokesman Denis Boucher said in an interview. "We have sufficient delegates to win the Conservative leadership but we are not taking anything for granted."

Indonesian envoy to Paris dies

PARIS (AFP) — Indonesia's ambassador to France, Dody Achdiat Tisna Amidjaja, has died in hospital after undergoing surgery, the Indonesian embassy said here Monday. Mr. Amidjaja, who had a heart condition, died last Wednesday. He had been under treatment in a German hospital, the embassy added. He had been posted in Paris since June 1989.

28 kidnappers, soldier killed in Philippines

BASILAN, Philippines (AP) — Government troops pursuing Muslims who had kidnapped a Spanish priest killed 28 in weekend clashes, officials said Monday. A soldier was also killed in one gun battle. The priest, the Rev. Bernardo Blanco, 65, of Zamora province in Spain, escaped last Wednesday after 48 days of captivity. The military then ordered a full-scale attack on the kidnappers. Mayor Leonardo Pioquinto of the capital town of Isabela on Basilan Island said 18 kidnappers were killed in a clash Friday in nearby Kapayawan town. Isabela is about 880 kilometres (550 miles) south of Manila. Another nine kidnappers were slain Sunday in another village in Kapayawan.

Features

Mujahedeen in standoff on strategic Salang Highway

QARABAGH, Afghanistan (AFP) — Only the turret of the olive-green Soviet-made BMP-1 armoured fighting vehicle protrudes above ground level, with its menacing cannon barrel pointing due north towards a faintly visible bunker.

"That's the enemy!" snarls a turbaned guerrilla of the Hezb-e-Islami Mujahedeen faction led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the country's prime minister designate.

The guerrilla is clutching a Kalashnikov assault rifle attached with a rare night-vision scope, and like the rest of his squad at this frontline checkpoint, he carries spare AK-47 magazines and hand grenades in elaborate hand-tooled leather pouches strung around his chest.

These Hezb are based in Qarabagh, a village about 45 kilometres north of the Afghan capital Kabul, and their enemy are Mujahedeen of Jamiat-e-Islami, dug-in just two kilometres up this, the strategic Salang Highway.

From the east, west and south the roads leading into Kabul are blocked by Hezb commanders, preventing essential supplies from reaching the capital, but here in the north, due to pre-

emptive measures by Ahmad Shah Masood, the Jamiat guerrilla turned defence minister, Hezb has been largely neutralised.

The squabble between Mr. Hekmatyar and Mr. Masood is a deep-rooted one, pre-dating the Mujahedeen April 1992 victory over the Moscow-backed Afghan communist regime.

But Mr. Hekmatyar is punishing Kabul with this blockade because of the rejection of his cabinet proposals by the Afghan president and Jamiat leader, Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Qarabagh is the headquarters of Hezb commander Abdul Karim Abed, known as Karim Khan, whom Defence Ministry officials claim is among the 7,000 Hezb Mujahedeen who recently defected to the Jamiat side.

Most of this number are alleged to come from the neighbouring provinces of Parwan and Kapisa but the Hezb sniper at the BMP-1 checkpoint dismisses these claims as "propaganda."

"We lost between 400-700 only, and many of these who were bought off have snatched back to our side again," the Hezb gunman said.

"Karim has not joined Jamiat," he added, "if he had this road would be open for govern-

ment convoys."

It is not clear why non-military transport freely ply the Salang Highway connecting the northern capitals Mazar-e-Sharif, Kunduz and Pul-e-Khumri with Kabul, but some Hezb commanders on the roadside indicated they were not strong enough to effect a complete blockade.

But the free passage of civilian vehicles is not without cost.

Once infamous for its highway robbers, the stretch of road be-

tween Qarabagh and Kabul is now relatively safe, apparently due to the example set by Mr. Masood's punitive measures against Hezb in Parwan-Kapisa.

But elsewhere, even in Jamiat-controlled stretches of the Salang Highway, local Mujahedeen commanders still exact a "toll" from passing vehicles.

From the Jamiat checkpoint facing the Hezb frontline at Qarabagh, and from both Hezb and Jamiat groups which share con-

trol of the village of Sarai Khoja a few kilometres (miles) to the south, one truck driver was obliged to pay the equivalent sums of \$50 and \$90 respectively to the guards.

Perhaps the people of Sarai Khoja need some special source of income, as their village, formerly a district headquarters with a thriving bazaar fed from the profits of the extensive surrounding vineyards, is now a bombed-out shell.



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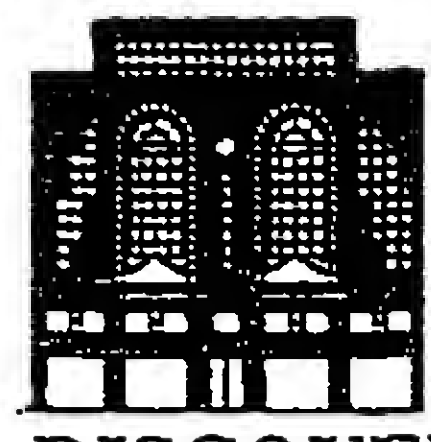
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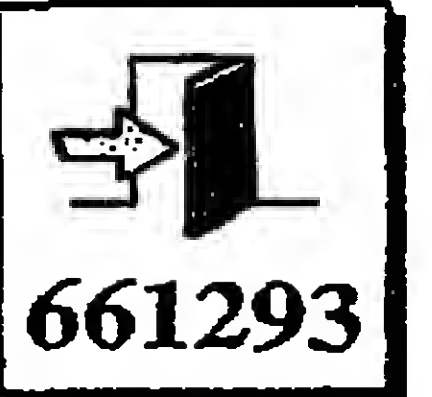
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U.N. report: Palestinian land is deteriorating

WASHINGTON (AP)—Even if Palestinians get their land occupied by Israel, they will have a homeland which is falling apart, according to a U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) report issued Monday.

While Israelis and Arabs are holding peace talks here over the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the economy of the two areas is deteriorating. The UNDP report said their gross domestic product has decreased each year since 1988 and per capita income is just over \$1,000, ten times less than Israel.

Air, soil and water are increasingly polluted, water sources are drying up and turning salty, and sewage and garbage are serious health problems.

"The land is being threatened by very serious environmental damage," said the report, prepared for UNDP by a team of experts who visited in late 1992. UNDP official John Oliver, who organised the independent mission headed by a former Dutch U.N. Ambassador, said that to think of what the Palestinians will face—if and when they get the territories as their state—"fills us with dread."

The Gaza Strip relies for water on an underground aquifer. "Gaza's aquifer is being severely over-exploited and salinated, to the extent that wells are going out of operation and water is becoming unpalatable and in certain areas even unusable for irrigation," the report said.

The problem "is of crisis dimensions and rapidly escalating," it said.

"By the end of the 1990s effectively they will be out of water," Mr. Oliver said in an interview.

Only about a quarter of the Gaza population is served by sewers. The rest use latrines that drain into cesspits, many of which frequently overflow.

"The abundant waste water and solid waste throughout the urban landscape contribute to the overall destruction of Gaza's water resource," the report said.

The Jordan River, sole source of surface water for Jordan, the West Bank and Israel, is used heavily by Israel to irrigate its fields. The river's flow is only one-quarter the level of 1950 and increasingly saline.

"Another highly controversial issue has been the removal of trees, in particular olive trees, by the occupying power," the report

said. It cited Palestinian sources as saying 78,000 olive trees have been uprooted in recent years by Israelis citing "security" concerns.

As a result of heavy stock grazing and untended cultivation of slopes "the fragile topsoil of the West Bank is at serious risk."

Urban areas on the West Bank are served by sewers but most of them discharge untreated sewage into stream beds.

"The mission saw streams largely composed of raw sewage flowing in the dry season far away from towns." Often the waste is used to fertilize plots "in all likelihood producing contaminated vegetables."

All over the occupied territories toxic industrial waste is mixed with household garbage and dumped in landfills.

"Landfills pose major pollution hazards to soil and water," in particular in the West Bank where pollutants can travel easily and quickly into groundwater and public water supplies which are not tested for trace chemicals, the report said.

Life expectancy in the occupied territories is 65—11 years less than in Israel. Infant mortality is six times higher in the occupied territories than in Israel, the report said.

The report said the Gulf war and the five-year "intifada" or uprising against Israeli rule wrecked the already frail economy.

The war led to an end of remittances from Palestinians expelled from oil-rich Gulf countries and to aid from those countries because of Palestine Liberation Organisation support for Iraq.

The intifada has led to severe economic disruption in the occupied territories, the report said.

"We believe it is a fair guess that at present one-third of the population is unemployed," the authors of the report said.

Mr. Oliver said the current lockdown of Palestinian workers from their previous jobs in Israel "will only make a terrible situation worse."

UNDP and other attempts to help are slowed by the Israeli military bureaucracy which runs the occupied territories, Mr. Oliver said.

"It is an occupation. It is a jail.... Military authorities are very unbending and hard to deal with," he said.



AMBASSADORS PRESENT CREDENTIALS: Six newly-appointed ambassadors to Jordan Monday presented their credentials to His Majesty King Hussein at Raghadan Palace. They were



DFLP keeps door for polls open

(Continued from page 1)

substance," the DFLP chief said that he and President Saddam agreed that the sanctions could only be lifted when Iraq's neighbours open their borders to allow supplies to go in. Mr. Hawatmeh said his personal efforts towards Arab reconciliation are expected to take him to Yemen and Morocco.

On the Palestinian front, the Palestinian leader insisted that the DFLP, the third largest PLO faction, is against the use of violence to solve internal political conflicts.

"The DFLP and all other national democratic forces are against the use of violence," Mr. Hawatmeh said, responding to calls made by Islamist demonstrators in Wihdat refugee camp last Friday to "shed the blood" of the pro-peace PLO and its delegation.

Mr. Hawatmeh, however, accused the PLO's "conservative wing" (Mr. Arafat and Fateh) of taking unilateral decisions regarding Palestinian participation in the peace talks and demanded collective decision-making within the PLO.

His repeated calls for PLO insistence on improving the conditions of Palestinian representation to include Jerusalem and those from the diaspora has fallen on deaf ears. Mr. Hawatmeh, who joined forces with nine other Damascus-based opposition factions and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) in opposing the ongoing talks, continued to demand suspension of Palestinian participation in the talks "to open a comprehensive Palestinian dialogue to come up with a common and collective decision to restart the negotiations based on U.N. resolutions."

If the conditions of the negotiations are improved, the DFLP would become a full partner in the talks, he said.

"We never gave our agreement for the release of all prisoners," Mr. Adaya said. "We had no guarantee that Ali Arafat would be freed and the word of the French negotiator was not enough."

Before his reelection Friday, Mr. Gouled, whose government is formed largely of Djibouti's other main ethnic group, the Issas, insisted that negotiations take place in Djibouti.

After the collapse of last year's talks, France withdrew troops it had posted between the warring parties as a buffer force. A government offensive followed, leading to several setbacks for the rebels.

members said.

In the Zarga case, according to a neighbour, the man had sold the land he owned to raise JD 20,000 to invest in Iraqi dinars with hopes that he could get at least a 10-fold return when the embattled currency regained its value as and when the international sanctions against Iraq were lifted or relaxed.

At least seven others were reportedly admitted to hospital after suffering heart attacks, and in one case a husband is said to have divorced his wife in Marka when he knew she had sold all gold owned by the family to buy the once-premium priced "Swiss" notes.

"The man was asking 'how she could have been so foolish to sell gold and buy a sinking currency?'" said a relative. "Never mind the reality that he himself, given the chance, would have plunged into the venture."

A few others have conveniently "disappeared" from their homes to escape creditors demanding repayment of their dues. In downtown Amman, eyewitnesses reported fights between relatives and friends, with those who lost money accusing others of "advising and encouraging" them to hoard the invalidated bills.

Those who can afford to philosophise about their losses put up a brave face, saying they now use the "Swiss" notes to light their cigarettes or decorate their walls.

But for a large number of others, it is difficult to absorb the loss since it represented their life savings.

"My dream of getting married in August has been shattered," said Farouk Maref, 32, an insurance company employee who had invested his savings for marriage in Iraqi dinars hoping that he

could make a small fortune by selling the currency. "I will never be able to collect enough money to pay for my marriage in the next five years," he said. "My fiancée's family is now demanding that I break off the engagement."

Some economists estimate that Jordanians lost around JD 15 million, but banking officials, and moneydealers argue the losses could have as much as JD 60 or JD 70 million.

Reports in the local press speak of individuals, including Iraqi businessmen, who were hoarding millions, with photographs of cartloads of the Iraqi currency.

Hopes that the government would succeed in its intervention to secure Iraqi agreement to honour the invalidated currency held by Jordanians were set back with a statement by Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor

Western diplomats based in Amman maintain that the DFLP and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) should not become part of the negotiating process.

This message, PLO insiders have said, could have been conveyed to Mr. Arafat, who in turn had not been responsive to the groups' demands.

Mr. Hawatmeh did not rule out that his group, which enjoys substantial support in the occupied territories, would take part in legislative elections in the interim period of self-rule. "We don't place the cart before the horse," he said.

He said the Israeli proposal presented to the Palestinian delegation in Washington last Thursday did not provide full legislative elections with its required authority that would enable the formation of an executive Palestinian body.

The proposal, which was studied and apparently rejected in its present form in Tunis Sunday, "provides only one body with limited jurisdiction for administrative rule under occupation, which is rejected by our people, because it does not exceed the current jurisdiction of the existing municipalities," Mr. Hawatmeh stressed.

Sceptical about the counter-proposal drawn up by the PLO leadership and members of the negotiating team in Tunis—which was to be presented to the Israeli delegation Monday, the Jordanian-born Hawatmeh predicted that the Palestinian document would merely be an "amendment of the Israeli project."

"The Palestinian team would present its project for its own self-rule which would take into account some elements presented in the Israeli plan," Mr. Hawatmeh said. "Those who said they rejected the Israeli project are lying because they are merely amending the Israeli plan."

Rabin survives no-confidence votes

(Continued from page 1)

brought a long-running battle to a head when he tendered his resignation Sunday demanding that Mrs. Aloni be removed, has yet to accept the compromise.

Mrs. Aloni has agreed, despite complaining bitterly of orthodox

Jewish attempts to muzzle her outspokenness on religion, to let go of education.

But the left-wing secular champion and head of the Meretz party will hold on to culture and add communication to her responsibilities under the deal.



(clockwise) Renato Batti, head of the European Community (EC) delegation mission, Wang Chi Je of China, Gian Federico Pedotti of Switzerland, Mario Gardenas of Colombia, Jesus Cabrera Munoz



Palestinian force faces dilemma

(Continued from page 1)

it, Fateh accused the Israeli intelligence, the Mossad, of issuing falsified statements in the name of the "Black Panthers" to stir internal conflict among the Palestinians.

A PLO official said his organisation suspects that 133 statements, which have been distributed since the intifada began in December 1987, have been forged either by the Israelis or fringe Palestinian groups opposed to the PLO leadership.

Fateh officials in Amman said that they have been in touch with "Black Panther" affiliated Fateh officials in the occupied territories to verify the originality of the "Black Panther" statements.

A Senior PLO official told the Jordan Times this week that "those statements were not published in the occupied territories and no copy of any recent statement was available in the territories."

"This would indicate that either the Mossad or the groups in Damascus wrote these statements," said one official.

In statements received by the media since December 1992 the "Black Panther" group felt a band of pro-negotiations leaders in Tunis.

A statement on "Black Panther" dated April 25, 1993, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times this week, has accused the leadership in Tunis and its representatives in the West Bank of colluding with the Israeli occupation forces in a plot to liquidate them.

Some of the "Black Panthers" had received orders to disband while the whereabouts of others were being revealed to the Israelis through collaborators who had been tipped off by Fateh, the statement said.

PLO officials in Amman and Tunis described the statement as "fake."

"This statement was probably manufactured by the Mossad," the head of the PLO information bureau in Tunis, Jamil Hilal, said.

Who are the 'Panthers'?

While very little is known about the Panthers and the Hawks, "most of the young men who join them are wanted by the Israelis for disregarding military orders or not renewing one permission

or another," according to an Amman-based Fateh official. "They numbered about 2,000 during the first year of the intifada when the Panthers and Hawks were first formed in 1988," he said.

"Today they are estimated to be no more than 200. The rest are in prison or have been killed by the Israelis."

"Those kids, who have had no chance to get an education for the last five years, do believe in armed struggle against the Israelis," said a senior member of the Palestinian Peoples' (formerly communist) Party, referring to the Black Panthers. "They believed that the Palestinian leadership was behind them. But now that the leadership has closed dialogue over armed struggle they feel lost."

Members of the PPP, which has been actively involved in the peace process despite its boycott of the ninth round, have substantiated claims that the Black Panthers and the Fateh Hawks have been increasingly "neglected" since the peace process began.

"The main thing about these groups is that they are made up of young men between the ages of 14 and 24 who wanted to back up the stone throwing intifada with some of the enemy's own medicine—guns," a PPP leader said.

"Once the PLO mainstream factions opted for negotiations, however, these groups began to get less funding for weapons," a PLO official added. "Less funding translated into less weapons and less self-defence for these young men," the official admitted. "The weapons were bought from the Israelis," he contended.

But most Fateh officials vehemently deny that support for the Black Panthers and the Fateh Hawks ever waned or that Fateh seeks to undermine them. "It is simply not so," said one veteran Fateh member who was deported from the West Bank for encouraging intifada related civil disobedience.

As if to verify that some of the charges made in the latest Black Panther statement are true, though, some Fateh members who are disenchanted with their group's leadership say that "Tunis" should have "explained" the change in tactics to its rank and file rather than just "give orders."

"There is no proper dialogue between the armed combatants in



Ledo of Mexico and Dato Paduka Mohammad Ben Haj Idris of Brunel. Attending the ceremonies were Chief of the Royal Court Khaled Al Karaki and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber (Petra)



the field and the leadership," a member of Fateh said.

In early May six members of Fateh Hawks were killed in two separate incidents in the Gaza Strip by Israeli soldiers.

While wire service reports in the occupied Gaza Strip did not report that the victims were Hawks, Amman-based members of Fateh claim they were.

"These young men were Fateh Hawks," one of them said.

The alleged Black Panther appeal and the consequent killings of the Fateh Hawks in Gaza were no coincidence, say members of the Damascus-based opposition groups.

"This is the end of these boys, and Fateh is turning a blind eye to the situation because it does not want unruly militants among its ranks," said an official of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). "It's a form of disciplinary action," said the official without directly accusing Fateh of complicity in the "liquidation" of the militants.

None of the groups critical of the alleged Fateh policy towards the Fateh Hawks and Black Panthers has any suggestion on how Fateh could protect their groups from liquidation, however.

The Panther statement named overall head of the Palestinian peace negotiating team Faisal Husseini as well as negotiations advisor Sari Nusseibeh as active members of the plot to liquidate them.

The April 25 statement criticising the peace process was not the first issued in the group's name. In the third round of the peace process the group issued a statement condemning chief bilateral negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi

for "selling out" his people. Particularly active in the north-west West Bank, around Jenin and Nablus, the Panthers are known to use safe houses and travel from one place to the other at night. The Fateh Hawks are said to operate mainly in the refugee camps in Gaza.

Residents in the Nablus area reported that as far back as 1991 the Black Panthers began taking the law into their own hands and unilaterally killed those they claimed to be Palestinian collaborators. A subsequent order from Tunis to end "collaborator killings" was ignored by the Panthers.

Some women allegedly involved in prostitution activities were also reportedly killed by the group in the centre of Nablus for "soiling the name of Palestinians," according to Nablus-based feminist Sahar Khalifeh.

Some Palestinian observers believe that if the PLO leadership did order the disbanding of the group it may have done so as a concession to the Israelis at the peace talks.

While most PLO members supportive of the peace talks deny and "doubt" that such orders were given by Tunis, critics say that the PLO was wrong to alienate Fateh affiliated militants as the peace process continued.

"The PLO gave these kids no protection, and they cannot disband because they are wanted by the Israelis," said one Amman-based critic. "But since the PLO is talking to the Israelis in Washington it can ask for a ceasefire on both sides as a solution to their problem," the critic continued. "This is more realistic and healthy than confrontation and bloodshed."

Human rights issues threaten talks

(Continued from page 1)

wanted an Israeli pledge that all measures agreed for the interim period would finally lead to Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories according to U.N. Resolution 242.

They also sought a clear statement of territorial integrity for the Palestinian interim government covering all the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, including Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Najjab said the Israeli offer did not specify a geographical limit to the Palestinians' territory.

He also said Israel had proposed only a 15 to 20 member executive council with adminis-

trative powers, compared to the 180-member body with legislative powers the Palestinians wanted.

"We may return to an impasse because of Israel's insistence that it does not occupy a Palestinian land and its failure to recognise that it is negotiating with representatives of the Palestinian people and not with populations," Mr. Najjab said.

He said Israel's offer did not mention withdrawal from occupied land at all.

The nine-point "informal draft" submitted by Israeli negotiators referred to the role of a Palestinian Executive Council (PEC).

Surprise invalidation of Iraqi banknotes hits many Jordanians badly

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Suicides, heart attacks, divorces, fistcuffs and "disappearances" have been reported among Jordanians who found their savings totally wiped out by Iraq's invalidation of part of its pre-1990 banknotes.

By and large, it appeared that lower-middle class families constituted the highest number of losers although the volume of the currency they held was low compared with the millions hoarded by others.

At least two Jordanian men shot themselves to death last week—one in Zarqa and the other in Wihdat camp—after learning that their investments in Iraqi currency were rendered worthless by Baghdad's decision to withdraw the so-called "Swiss" notes of 25-dinar denomination, neighbours and family

members said.

In the Zarqa case, according to a neighbour, the man had sold the land he owned to raise JD 20,000 to invest in Iraqi dinars with hopes that he could get at least a 10-fold return when the embattled currency regained its value as and when the international sanctions against Iraq were lifted or relaxed.

At least seven others were reportedly admitted to hospital after suffering heart attacks, and in one case a husband is said to have divorced his wife in Marka when he knew she had sold all gold owned by the family to buy the once-premium priced "Swiss" notes.

"The man was asking 'how she could have been so foolish to sell gold and buy a sinking currency?'" said a relative. "Never mind the reality that he himself, given the chance, would have plunged into the venture."

A few others have conveniently "disappeared" from their homes to escape creditors demanding repayment of their dues. In downtown Amman, eyewitnesses reported fights between relatives and friends, with those who lost money accusing others of "advising and encouraging" them to hoard the invalidated bills.

Those who can afford to philosophise about their losses put up a brave face, saying they now use the "Swiss" notes to light their cigarettes or decorate their walls.

But for a large number of others, it is difficult to absorb the loss since it represented their life savings.

"My dream of getting married in August has been shattered," said Farouk Maref, 32, an insurance company employee who had invested his savings for marriage in Iraqi dinars hoping that he

could make a small fortune by selling the currency. "I will never be able to collect enough money to pay for my marriage in the next five years," he said. "My fiancée's family is now demanding that I break off the engagement."

Some economists estimate that Jordanians lost around JD 15 million, but banking officials, and moneydealers argue the losses could have as much as JD 60 or JD 70 million.

Reports in the local press speak of individuals, including Iraqi businessmen, who were hoarding millions, with photographs of cartloads of the Iraqi currency.

Hopes that the government would succeed in its intervention to secure Iraqi agreement to honour the invalidated currency held by Jordanians were set back with a statement by Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor

Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi that outcome of contacts with Baghdad were "not encouraging."

Other sources said the Iraqi government had categorically told Jordan that it would not make an exemption to the invalidation and compensate Jordanians.

Despite the initial negative response from Baghdad, Jordan is continuing its efforts with the Iraqi government, sources said. They did not elaborate whether the authorities were proposing any specific mechanism to convince Baghdad of the Jordanian case.

Genuine businessmen who had taken Iraqi currency with formal Iraqi government permission in payment for goods and services are trying to organise a pressure group to support their case.

"I am stuck with 12 million dinars which I took out with me six months ago," said a

trader who used to send food-stuff to Iraq. "I still have a copy of the Iraqi government permission authorising me to carry the money with me through the border."

In downtown Amman, "Swiss" notes continued to change hands Monday at around five fils to the Iraqi dinar—on-eight of the currency's value last Tuesday, one day before Baghdad decreed the invalidation and set a Monday deadline for Iraqis to exchange "Swiss" notes for new bills at state-run banks within the country.

Support for Saddam

It was difficult to assess any shift in Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's popularity among Jordanians following the Iraqi refusal to compensate Jordanians for the losses. If there is any shift, however, people appeared to be evenly split over it.

Many feel that President Saddam, whom they sup-

ported ardently during the Gulf crisis, has let them down.

"Saddam has kicked us in the teeth," said Suleiman Awje, an employee at a downtown garments store.

"We Jordanians were among the strong supporters of Iraq during the crisis. See how he has repaid us?" said Mr. Awje, who was among the "lucky few" whose losses were manageable.

Some of the losers wanted to organise an anti-Saddam protest in downtown Amman, which witnessed hundreds of pro-Iraqi rallies during the Gulf crisis. But the idea was dampened by counter-arguments that Baghdad was not targeting Jordanians in its decision to withdraw the "Swiss" notes.

"We were only caught in the cross-fire," said Zubair Hussein, a goldsmith. "Saddam's fire was aimed at the sheikhs of the Gulf who were

hoarding Iraqi dinars to undermine the Iraqi economy and make the Iraqis suffer."

"Now the sheikhs have lost billions, and they deserved such a treatment," said Mr. Hussein. "I am not crying over my loss since it is serving Iraq and its people."

The goldsmith was echoing a widely-held belief that more than 90 per cent of the "Swiss" notes were held by speculators and governments in the Gulf states in a bid to hasten the economic collapse of Iraq, and that it was fair retribution by Baghdad in that "economic war."

Not many among the losers in Jordan share such a sentiment. Fatima, a government clerk who lost JD 800 she held in the worthless currency, said: "It is one thing to talk about supporting Saddam and Iraq since we love him. But it is a different story when one has to pay for it in hard-won currency."